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STORIES BY
WILLIAM CARLETON

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WILLIAM CARLETON

WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

TIGHE HOPKINS

THE GRESHAM PUBLISHING COMPANY
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Irish life are far more real than those of Mrs. S. C. Hall. "Why, of course they are!" cries he. "Did she ever live with the people as I did? Did she ever dance and fight with them as I did? *Did she ever get drunk with them as I did?*"

Carleton's Ireland, then, is a vanishing and all but a vanished land. In this Ireland the piper still trails his pipes upon the country-side; the blind fiddler raises the reel; Buckramback the dancing-master puts us through our paces; the hedge schoolmaster hangs out his "advartaaisement", thunders his "Silence, I say, you Bœotians!" and swears "by the sowl of Newton, the inventor of fluxions"; the story-teller has his seat in every farmhouse and cabin, the least taste in life o' the malt beside him; the Little People, the fairies, are propitiated, and every stone in the glen or on the mountain-side has its legend; the "poor scholar" begs his way to Munster; pilgrims throng to Lough Derg; Mass is said at the wayside altar, the people kneeling around it on their strips of carpet; the dreadful Ribbonmen hold their midnight meeting in the chapel, profane the altar, and steal forth to lay a homestead in ashes. In the wonderful transmutations of this peasant life you shall hear the gush of poetic prayer, the imprecation, terrible but scarcely less poetic,

the heart-whole laughter, the gurgle of death on a pallet in a foodless cabin, the song in which the Gaelic melts into the melting tune, the "hareeling" home of the bride to the house of the bridegroom, the wild sob of the mother over the son who will soon be on the water, the soft accents of wheedling, blarney, and cajolery, the big voice of the priest threatening from the altar or cracking jokes at the farmer's board, the piping of children half-naked and merry, and the honey brogue of the girls. It is all strange, fantastic, warm-hued, infinitely and exquisitely Gaelic. "Did she ever dance and fight with them as I did? *Did she ever get drunk with them as I did?*" The whisky does not cease to flow while the keener is keening over the corpse; the wake is almost as much a feast as the wedding is; the rousing fair is responsible for the bloody fight of the factions, which leaves the street red, and is followed by a funeral; the chapel seems the only place to which the bhoy does not carry his shillelagh; Pat Frayne, the hedge schoolmaster, breaks off in a story to remind his audience that the "raal Irish cuilgeh" must be root-growing, and discourse learnedly on those of a "widow-and-orphan-making quality"; heads are broken with a "howly, howly, howly!" (which) "; and Neal Malone, the diminutive tailor who ca

get nobody to fight with him, protests to "the whole parish" that he is *blue-mowlded for want of a batin'*.

Carleton gives us all this Ireland of the past out of a heart the most emotional and with an eye the most observant, penetrating, and discriminative. His pathos is equalled, perhaps even a little excelled, by his tragic force, but he is greatest of all in humour. His brogue is the supplest and subtlest, the most intimate and most copious that ever flowed from pen. Only an Irishman, of course, can write the true brogue. The brogue of Mr. Kipling's Mulvaney is a thing uncouth and gross; that of Mr. Dunne's Mr. Dooley is quite unutterably horrible. Mr. Edmund Downey, in his Irish extravaganzas, gives us the right, mellifluous article. But the master in this kind is the Great Peasant. Mr. T. P. O'Connor, in a fine essay written many years ago, hears in Carleton "a laughter as spontaneous and human as that of Cervantes". Carleton's *is* as spontaneous and human as the laughter of Cervantes; it is also, I think, heartier at once and tenderer. And when the Irishman stands at the bier of one of his characters, or gives way to a sudden rush of endearment, or lifts his voice in threat and malediction, it is a muse of fire that breathes through him.

INTRODUCTION

William Carleton was born in 1794—town-
land of Prillisk, parish of Clogher, county of
Tyrone—and died in Dublin in 1869. Our
knowledge of the man himself, and the sore
tale of his life's struggle, we principally owe
to Mr. David J. O'Donoghue. While Lever,
Lover, Banim, Gerald Griffin, Miss Edge-
worth, and the slipshod but lively Lady
Morgan have had biographers, Carleton, as
Mr. O'Donoghue observes, "has either been
overlooked, or the difficulty of presenting him
to the world as he lived, acted, and was, has
proved too great for the memoir writers of
the intervening period". Fortunately for us,
it did not prove too great for Mr. O'Donoghue.
He discovered—I believe, at least, that the dis-
covery was his—Carleton's fragmentary Auto-
biography, which was a great thing to begin
with. In this, however, Carleton only just gets
in sight of his literary period, and Mr. O'Don-
oghue, whose materials were none too plentiful,
had to set forth the forty years of his career as
a writer. Scant material was not, moreover,
the biographer's sole hindrance. There wa
much in Carleton's character and life tha
demanded explanation, defence, apology: i
[illegible], changing of sides, vehem
[illegible] of one party and now of anot
[illegible] to the priests (he tu
[illegible]

Protestant early in his career), political and religious tirades which wearied and offended everyone in turn. But Mr. O'Donoghue, writing sympathetically yet with extreme judiciousness, has made most things clear in the troubled history of this half-educated, wayward, capricious, and very changeable genius. Had we nothing but the Autobiography whereby to judge him, our estimate of Carleton would, I think, be a rather unkind one; for, to be quite candid, it is not altogether pleasant reading. An extraordinary document it is in all respects (Mrs. Cashel Hoey, in a discriminating introduction, draws "a partial parallel" between Carleton and Rousseau in the "startling candour of their respective self-revelation"), one of the most intensely and naïvely human documents bequeathed to any generation; but it shows us a man of extravagant moodiness, a rememberer of old grievances and grudges, one who is ever prone to exclaim against the public for a neglect to which his own faults had greatly and grievously contributed. Those whom Carleton likes he is almost boisterous in praise of; whom he likes not, he has a humour to smite well—and he smites them.

"He was", says Mrs. Cashel Hoey, "extraordinarily sensitive to personal criticism"—criticism of his work, on the other hand, he

never objected to—"eagerly susceptible of praise, not always discriminative of its origin or its worth, so keenly alive to neglect or want of sympathy that he blamed the whole Irish public for his misfortunes—that these were heavy i willingly admitted, but he lent a helping har. to their manufacture—yet could he not be persuaded that coarse ridicule and gross misrepresentation of persons and things sacred to them were legitimate causes of offence to his own countrymen, and especially to his own class."

This is perfectly true, and not at all unfairly put; and it may be added that Mr. O'Donoghue's *Life* is a most necessary corrective of Carleton's Autobiography. A necessary and excellent corrective it is; reminding us, among many other things in Carleton's favour, what manner of man he was, and in what circumstances, when he railed thus bitterly against fortune, the world, and all his misery. An old poor man he was, feeble in limb, half-blind, and with a cancer of the tongue; surveying forty years of struggle forty years of something very like penury, an enterprising days of renewed struggle and penury for those whom he must shortly leave, and who were always inexpressibly dear to him. Closely [illegible] the memory of the e things, our hearts are Carleton's, even as they are when he

brings us in the company of Shane Fadh, of Phelim O'Toole, of Father Philemy M'Guirk, of Neal Malone, of Ellish Connell, and all the sweet Irish girls who sun these delicious pages. Forgiveness? No. At this day that were scarcely less than an impertinence. It is a feeling of deep gratitude, transforming into love.

The piece of Autobiography, for it is a piece and nothing more, fills a volume, but a few words must suffice for it here. The Ireland into which Carleton was born was a hard Ireland for the Irish of his class. There was no school for the Irish child except the hedge school, and there was practically no law for the Irish Catholic. The peasant farmer had neither protection nor security; he was well-nigh completely at the mercy of the landlord's agent; and for years after the '98 England knew him only as the buffoon of the stage, the inventor of "bulls", and the man who held behind a hedge a blunderbuss loaded with slugs. It was to a peasant farmer that Carleton, the youngest of fourteen children, owed his birth. There are not many amiable portraits in the Autobiography, but those of his father and mother are from the heart of the most affectionate of sons. Carleton's father, who can have had but little edu-

cation of any kind, was a notable and gifted man. "He possessed", says the son, "a memory not merely great or surprising, but absolutely astonishing. He would repeat nearly the whole of the Old and New Testaments by heart, and was besides a living index to almost every chapter and verse in them. In all other respects, too, his memory was amazing. . . . As a narrator of old tales, legends, and historical anecdotes he was unrivalled, and his stock of them inexhaustible. . . . With all kinds of charms, old ranns or poems, old prophecies, religious superstitions, tales of pilgrims, miracles and pilgrimages, anecdotes of blessed priests and friars, revelations from ghosts and fairies, he was thoroughly acquainted." It is easy to see whence William himself derives his own consummate lore. The father spoke the Irish and English languages with equal fluency. Altogether, oral tradition and the hedge school gave something which the board school is not able to impart. Carleton himself complains often that education "seems to fly" from him, but on the whole we may be grateful that he never made acquaintance with the Standards. Latin he knew well (there was talk at one time of preparing him for the priesthood), and he tells us that he read his classics "like [illegible]

Of his mother Carleton has left us a beautiful description. "My mother, whose maiden name was Kelly—Mary Kelly—possessed the sweetest and most exquisite of human voices. In her early life, I have been often told by those who had heard her sing, that any previous intimation of her presence at a wake, dance, or other festive occasion, was sure to attract crowds of persons, many from a distance of several miles, in order to hear from her lips the touching old airs of the country. . . . I have often been present when she has *raised the keen*—as it is called—over the corpse of some relative or neighbour, and my readers may judge of the melancholy charm which accompanied this expression of her sympathy, when I assure them that the general clamour of violent grief was gradually diminished by admiration, until it became ultimately hushed, and no voice was heard but her own wailing, in sorrowful but solitary beauty."

Carleton's mother inspired him to the end of his life. It is the mother element in him that makes Carleton the most perfect of all delineators of Irish womanhood. There are no Irish peasant women like Carleton's, and they are some of the world's loveliest, as they are its purest, lowers of fiction.

The elder Carleton died when "Willy" was

of Clogher; and then, trembling like a boy, he went to call on Anne. They had never spoken before, and they never spoke again. Anne was married to a "decent man" of Carleton's acquaintance, who was present at the interview. Turning to him, Carleton said: "Michael, there stands the only woman I ever loved beyond the power of language to express. She had my first affection, and I loved her beyond any woman that ever breathed, and strange to say, until this occasion we never exchanged a syllable." "Well," was Anne's answer, "I can say on my part—and I am not ashamed to say it—that I never loved any man as I loved you; but there was one thing clear, that it wasn't our fate ever to become man and wife. Had you married me it's not likely the world would have ever heard of you. As it is, I am very happily married, and lead a happy life with as good and kind a husband as ever lived." Michael, it seems, was "rather pleased and gratified than otherwise". They all shook hands, and from that day Anne and Carleton saw each other no more.

Having danced, fought, wrestled, flirted, and idled away the best part of his youth, Carleton found himself one day at the end of his tether. His elder brother, small blame to him, put Master Willy to the door. At this time he

had just happened upon *Gil Blas*, and the adventures of the picaresque hero of Le Sage almost turned his unsettled brain. He too would have adventures. "I'll try", said he, "what the world's made of;" and without a penny in his pocket, or a wallet on his back, he set out to walk from Tyrone to Dublin. As might be expected, adventure did not lack. We behold him pedagoguing in the family of a bullying farmer, riding in a hearse, pulling off his shirt behind the door of a garret to hand it as security to the landlady, selling a handkerchief for two shillings to some sailors, and at last walking his way one evening into Dirty Lane, Dublin. Dublin was neither a calm nor a safe harbour, and endless were Carleton's shifts for a living there. He made acquaintance with a beggar's cellar, a Hugoesque Cour des Miracles on a small scale; he was amanuensis to a "literary tailor"; he bolted from lodgings when the bill became due; and he was nearly married by an amorous landlady. A softer season came. He got an excellent tutorship and home in a kindly family, and with this a clerkship in the Sunday School Society. Here was a signal chance to give hostages to fortune, and William Carleton was the man to seize it: straightway he married a wife. His green days lie behind him now; not so, however, his

troubles. The dreary revolution of these begins to be real from about the date of Carleton's marriage; they are the distressful epic of Mr. O'Donoghue's portion of the *Life*. In those pages also, and not here, they must be studied.

doubtful", says his biographer, "whether Carleton made more than £150 in any year by his pen." "Even at his most active period, when his name was one to conjure with in Ireland and America, he calculated that his earnings for sixteen years yielded an average of £110 a year." During part of this time the poor man was trying to support three families; and "it could easily be shown that his difficulties are mainly to be traced to his generosity to others, and to the cares of his numerous family". Again: "From the time he obtained his pension[1] to the date of his death, his income", from Ireland and America, "did not average £50 a year".

Now Carleton may have been fitful and unsystematic in his work—he derived little pleasure from it; and he never wrote except upon necessity—yet his literary output was a very considerable one. Mr. O'Donoghue's bibliography of his writings fills more than six octavo pages. The truth is that Carleton was always miserably paid. He never knew how to conduct or order his affairs, wisdom of the world was shut

[1] In 1848 Carleton obtained from the Government a pension of £200 a year. The signatures to the petition, representing all creeds and classes, all political parties and all professions, made the document almost a national one.

out from this man at all entrances, and to the end of his life's battle the publishers drove their bargains not with his genius but with his wants. Liking it or liking it not, he does nevertheless write, write, write—but the profit of his efforts misses him. His condition worsens as his years and his needs increase; and when the genius of his heyday begins to fail him he is asking prices which at one time he should have received double and again, but which no market will any longer yield. And he is reduced lower than to bargainings with publishers. The story of literature has poignant chapters, and to one of them belongs the letter in which Carleton, at the age of sixty-nine, asks £30 from Dr. Corry to pay the premium on the policy which is all he has to leave his family.

In a word, the perpetual struggle of Carleton's life is made clear to us only at its clouded close. But our knowledge of this struggle reveals and explains much to us, and draws us closer to him. With the echo of the cry that has been apt to irritate, we get also its pathetic meaning. When patience, the tired mare, gives out, as sometimes she will do, the temper of the battered weary man does the like, and he runs bad humours on the whole Irish public. We see it all in the just pages of his biographer, and seeing it, we find Carleton not only great

but lovable. His bitterest cry was indeed not for himself but for his kindred. We remember this, and lay his faults in that grave of Mount Jerome cemetery which is dear to every Irishman.

TIGHE HOPKINS.

Contents

The Party Fight and Funeral

We ought, perhaps, to inform our readers that the connection between a party fight and funeral is sufficiently strong to justify the author in classing them under the title which is prefixed to this story. The one being usually the natural result of the other, is made to proceed from it, as is, unhappily, too often the custom in real life among the Irish.

It has been long laid down as a universal principle that self-preservation is the first law of nature. An Irishman, however, has nothing to do with this; he disposes of it as he does with the other laws, and washes his hands out of it altogether. But commend him to a fair, dance, funeral, or wedding, or to any other sport where there is a likelihood of getting his head or his bones broken, and if he survive, he will remember you with a kindness peculiar to himself, to the last day of his life—will drub you from head to heel if he finds that any misfortune has kept you out of a row beyond the usual period of three months—will render the same service to any of your friends that stand in need of it; or, in short, will go to the world's

end, or fifty miles farther, as he himself would say, to serve you, provided you can procure him a bit of decent fighting. Now, in truth and soberness, it is difficult to account for this propensity; especially when the task of ascertaining it is assigned to those of another country, or even to those Irishmen whose rank in life places them too far from the customs, prejudices, and domestic opinions of their native peasantry, none of which can be properly known without mingling with them. To my own knowledge, however, it proceeds in a great measure from *education*. And here I would beg leave to point out an omission of which the several boards of education have been guilty, and which, I believe, no one but myself has yet been sufficiently acute and philosophical to ascertain, as forming a *sine qua non* in the national instruction of the lower orders of Irishmen.

The cream of the matter is this:—a species of ambition prevails in the Green Isle, not known in any other country. It is an ambition of about three miles by four in extent; or, in other words, is bounded by the limits of the parish in which the subject of it may reside. It puts itself forth early in the character, and a hardy perennial it is. In my own case, its first development was noticed in the hedge-school which I attended. I had not been long there, till I was forced to declare myself either for the Cargs or the Murphys, two tiny factions that had split the school between them. The day on which the ceremony of my

declaration took place was a solemn one. After school, we all went to the bottom of a deep valley, a short distance from the school-house; up to the moment of our assembling there, I had not taken my stand under either banner: that of the Caseys was a sod of turf, stuck on the end of a broken fishing-rod—the eagle of the Murphys was a Cork red potato, hoisted in the same manner. The turf was borne by an urchin, who afterwards distinguished himself in fairs and markets as a *builla batthah* of the first grade, and from this circumstance he was nicknamed *Parrah Rackhan.* The potato was borne by little Mickle M'Phauden Murphy, who afterwards took away Katty Bane Sheridan, without asking either her own consent or her father's. They were all then boys, it is true, but they gave a tolerable promise of that eminence which they subsequently attained.

When we arrived at the bottom of the glen, the Murphys and the Caseys, including their respective followers, ranged themselves on either side of a long line, which was drawn between the belligerent powers with the butt-end of one of the standards. Exactly on this line was I placed. The word was then put to me in full form—"Whether will you side with the dacent Caseys, or the blackguard Murphys?" "Whether will you side with the dacent Murphys, or the blackguard Caseys?" "The potato for ever!" said I, throwing up my caubeen, and running over to the Murphy standard. In the twinkling of an eye we were at it; and in a short time the deuce an eye some of us

had to twinkle. A battle royal succeeded that lasted near half an hour, and it would probably have lasted above double the time, were it not for the appearance of the "master", who was seen by a little shrivelled *vidette*, who wanted an arm, and could take no part in the engagement. This was enough—we instantly radiated in all possible directions, so that by the time he had descended through the intricacies of the glen to the field of battle, neither victor nor vanquished was visible, except, perhaps, a straggler or two as they topped the brow of the declivity, looking back over their shoulders, to put themselves out of doubt as to their visibility by the master. They seldom looked in vain, however, for there he usually stood, shaking up his rod, silently prophetic of its application on the following day. This threat, for the most part, ended in smoke; for except he horsed about forty or fifty of us, the infliction of impartial justice was utterly out of his power.

But besides this, there never was a realm in which the evils of a divided cabinet were more visible: the truth is, the monarch himself was under the influence of female government—an influence which he felt it either contrary to his inclination, or beyond his power, to throw off. "Poor Norah, long may *yes reign!*" we often used to exclaim, to the visible mortification of the "master", who felt the benevolence of the wish bottomed upon an indirect want of allegiance to himself. Well, it was a *trying* scene! —how we used to stand with the waistbands of our smallclothes cautiously grasped in our

hands, with a timid show of resistance, our brave red faces slobbered over with tears, as we stood marked for execution! Never was there a finer specimen of deprecation in eloquence than we then exhibited—the supplicating look right up into the master's face—the touching modulation of the whine—the additional tightness and caution with which we grasped the waistbands with one hand, when it was necessary to use the other in wiping our eyes and noses with the polished sleeve-cuff—the sincerity and vehemence with which we promised never to be guilty again, still shrewdly including the condition of present impunity, for our offence:—"this—one—time—master, if ye plaise, sir;" and the utter hopelessness and despair which were legible in the last groan, as we grasped the "master's" leg in utter recklessness of judgment, were all perfect in their way. Reader, have you ever got a reprieve from the gallows? I beg pardon, my dear sir; I only meant to ask, are you capable of entering into what a personage of that description might be supposed to feel, on being informed, after the knot had been neatly tied under the left ear, and the cap drawn over his eyes, that her majesty had granted him a full pardon? But you remember your own schoolboy days, and that's enough.

The nice discrimination with which Norah used to time her interference was indeed surprising. God help us! limited was our experience, and shallow our little judgments, or we might have known what the master meant,

when with the upraised arm hung over us, his eye was fixed upon the door of the kitchen, waiting for Norah's appearance.

Long, my fair and virtuous countrywomen, I repeat it to you all, as I did to Norah—may you reign in the hearts and affections of your husbands (but nowhere else), the grace, ornaments, and happiness of their hearths and lives, you jewels, you! You are paragons of all that's good, and your feelings are highly creditable to yourselves and to humanity.

When Norah advanced, with her brawny uplifted arm (for she was a powerful woman), and forbidding aspect, to interpose between us and the avenging terrors of the birch, do you think that she did not reflect honour on her sex and the national character? I sink the base allusion to the *mission* of fresh butter, which we had placed in her hands that morning, or the dish of eggs, or of meal, which we had either begged or stolen at home, as a present for her: disclaiming, at the same time, the rascally idea of giving it as a bribe or from any motive beneath the most lofty-minded and disinterested generosity on our part.

Then again, never did a forbidding face shine with so winning and amicable an expression as did hers on that merciful occasion. The sun dancing a hornpipe on Easter Sunday morning, or the full moon sailing as proud as a peacock in a new hide head-dress, was a very disagreeable sight, compared to Norah's red [illegible] face, [illegible] in her dread cap with [illegible], that [illegible] to her masculine and

substantial neck. Owing to her influence, the whole economy of the school was good; for we were permitted to cuff one another and do whatever we pleased, with impunity, *if* we brought the meal, eggs, or butter; except some scapegoat who was not able to accomplish this, and he generally received on his own miserable carcass what was due to us all.

Poor Jack Murray! His last words on the scaffold, for being concerned in the murder of Pierce the gauger, were, that he got the first of his bad habits under Pat Mulligan and Norah—that he learned to steal by secreting at home, butter and meal to paste up the master's eyes to his bad conduct—and that his fondness for quarrelling arose from being permitted to head a faction at school; a most ungrateful return for the many acts of grace which the indulgence of Norah caused to be issued in his favour.

I was but a short time under Pat, when, after the general example, I had my cudgel, which I used to carry regularly to a certain furze bush within fifty perches of the "seminary", where I hid it till after "dismiss". I grant it does not look well in me to become my own panegyrist; but I can at least declare that there were few among the Caseys able to resist the prowess of this right arm, puny as it was at the period in question. Our battles were obstinate and frequent; but as the quarrels of the two families and their relations on each side were as bitter and pugnacious in fairs and markets as ours were in school, we hit upon the plan of holding our Lilliputian engagements

upon the same days on which our fathers and brothers contested. According to this plan, it very often happened that the corresponding parties were successful, and as frequently, that whilst the Caseys were well drubbed in the fair, their sons were victorious at school, and *vice versa*.

For my part, I was early trained to cudgelling, and before I reached my fourteenth year, could pronounce as sage and accurate an opinion upon the merits of a *shillelagh*, as it is called, or cudgel, as a veteran of sixty could at first sight. Our plan of preparing them was this: we sallied out to any place where there was an underwood of blackthorn or oak, and, having surveyed the premises with the eye of a connoisseur, we selected the straightest root-growing piece which we could find: for if not root-growing, we did not consider it worth cutting, knowing from experience that a mere branch, how straight and fair soever it might look, would be apt to snap in the twist and tug of war. Having cut it as close to the root as possible, we then lopped off the branches, and put it up in the chimney to season. When seasoned, we took it down, and wrapping it in brown paper, well steeped in hog's lard or oil, we buried it in a horse dunghill, paying it a daily visit for the purpose of making it straight by doubling back the bends or angles across the line, in a direction contrary to their natural tendency. Having duly repeated this until we had made it straight, and renewed the oiled wrapping paper until the staff was perfectly

[illegible] with a woollen cloth, [illegible] and [illegible], [illegible] it a [illegible]. This was the last process, except that, if we thought it too light at the top, we used to bore a hole in the lower end with a red-hot iron spindle, into which we poured melted lead, for the purpose of giving it the [illegible] weight.

There were very few of Paddy Mullipan's scholars without a choice collection of such cudgels, and scarcely one who had not, before his fifteenth year, a just claim to be called the hero of a hundred fights, and the heritor of as many bumps on the cranium as would strike both Gall and Spurzheim speechless.

Now this, be it known, was, and in some districts yet is, an integral part of an Irish peasant's *education*. In the northern parts of Ireland, where the population of the Catholics on the one side, and of Protestants and Dissenters on the other, is nearly equal, I have known the respective scholars of Catholic and Protestant schools to challenge each other, and meet half-way to do battle, in vindication of their respective creeds; or for the purpose of establishing the character of their respective masters as the more learned man; for if we were to judge by the nature of the education then received, we would be led to conclude that a more commercial nation than Ireland was not on the face of the earth, it being the indispensable part of every scholar's business to become acquainted with the *three sets of Book-keeping*.

The boy who was the handiest and the most daring with the cudgel at Paddy Mulligan's school was Denis Kelly, the son of a wealthy farmer in the neighbourhood. He was a rash, hot-tempered, good-natured lad, possessing a more than common share of this blackthorn ambition; on which account he was cherished by his relations as a boy that was likely at a future period to be able to walk over the course of the parish, in fair, market, or patron. He certainly grew up a stout, able, young fellow; and before he reached nineteen years, was unrivalled at the popular exercises of the peasantry. Shortly after that time he made his *début* in a party-quarrel, which took place in one of the Christmas *Margamores*, and fully sustained the anticipations which were formed of him by his relations. For a year or two afterwards no quarrel was fought without him; and his prowess rose until he had gained the very pinnacle of that ambition which he had determined to reach. About this time I was separated from him, having found it necessary, in order to accomplish my objects in life, to reside with a relation in another part of the country.

The period of my absence, I believe, was about fifteen years, during which space I heard no account of him whatever. At length, however, that inextinguishable attachment which turns the affections and memory to the friends of our early days—to the scenes which we traversed when the heart was light and the spirit buoyant—induced me to make a visit to my native place, that I might witness

the progress of time and care upon those faces that were once so familiar to me; that I might again look upon the meadows, and valleys, and groves, and mountains, where I had so often played, and to which I still found myself bound by a tie that a more enlightened view of life and nature only made stronger and more enduring. I accordingly set off, and arrived late in the evening of a December day, at a little town within a few miles of my native home. On alighting from the coach and dining, I determined to walk home, as it was a fine frosty night. The full moon hung in the blue unclouded firmament in all her lustre, and the stars shone out with that tremulous twinkling motion, so peculiarly remarkable in frost. I had been absent, I said, about fifteen years, and felt that the enjoyment of this night would form an era in the records of my memory and my feelings. I find myself, indeed, utterly incapable of expressing what I experienced; but those who have ever been in similar circumstances will understand what I mean. A strong spirit of practical poetry and romance was upon me; and I thought that a commonplace approach in the open day would have rendered my return to the scenes of my early life a very stale and unedifying matter.

I left the inn at seven o'clock, and as I had only five miles to walk, I would just arrive about nine, allowing myself to saunter on at the rate of two miles and a half per hour. My sensations, indeed, as I went along, were singular; and as I took a solitary road that

went across the mountains, the loneliness of the walk, the deep gloom of the valleys, the towering height of the dark hills, and the pale silvery light of a sleeping lake, shining dimly in the distance below, gave me such a distinct notion of the sublime and beautiful, as I have seldom since experienced. I recommend every man who has been fifteen years absent from his native fields to return by moonlight.

Well, there is a mystery yet undiscovered in our being, for no man can know the full extent of his feelings or his capacities. Many a slumbering thought, and sentiment, and association reposes within him, of which he is utterly ignorant, and which, except he come in contact with those objects whose influence over his mind can alone call them into being, may never be awakened, or give him one moment of either pleasure or pain. There is, therefore, a great deal in the position which we hold in society, and simply in situation. I felt this on that night: for the tenor of my reflections was new and original, and my feelings had a warmth and freshness in them, which nothing but the situation in which I then found myself could give them. The force of association, too, was powerful: for as I advanced nearer home, the name of hills, and lakes, and mountains that I had utterly forgotten, as I thought, were distinctly revived in my memory; and a crowd of youthful thoughts and feelings, that I [illegible] with the world, and [illegible] my heart, [illegible] The

name of a townland would instantly return with its appearance; and I could now remember the history of families and individuals that had long been effaced from my recollection.

But what is even more singular is, that the superstitious terrors of my boyhood began to come over me as formerly, whenever a spot noted for supernatural appearances met my eye. It was in vain that I exerted myself to expel them, by throwing the barrier of philosophic reasoning in their way; they still clung to me, in spite of every effort to the contrary. But the fact is, that I was, for the moment, the slave of a morbid and feverish sentiment that left me completely at the mercy of the dark and fleeting images that passed over my fancy. I now came to a turn where the road began to slope down into the depths of a valley that ran across it. When I looked forward into the bottom of it, all was darkness impenetrable, for the moon-beams were thrown off by the height of the mountains that rose on each side of it. I felt an indefinite sensation of fear, because at that moment I recollected that it had been, in my younger days, notorious as the scene of an apparition, where the spirit of a murdered pedlar had never been known to permit a solitary traveller to pass without appearing to him, and walking cheek-by-jowl along with him to the next house on the way, at which spot he usually vanished. The influence of my feelings, or, I should rather say, the physical excitement of my nerves, was by no means slight, as these old traditions recurred

to me; although, at the same time, my moral courage was perfectly unimpaired, so that, notwithstanding this involuntary apprehension, I felt a degree of novelty and curiosity in descending the valley: "If it appear," said I, "I shall at least satisfy myself as to the truth of apparitions."

My dress consisted of a long, dark surtout, the collar of which, as the night was keen, I had turned up about my ears, and the corners of it met round my face. In addition to this I had a black silk handkerchief tied across my mouth to keep out the night air, so that, as my dark fur travelling-cap came down over my face, there was very little of my countenance visible. I now had advanced half-way into the valley, and all about me was dark and still: the moonlight was not nearer than the top of the hill which I was descending; and I often turned round to look upon it, so silvery and beautiful it appeared in the distance. Sometimes I stopped for a few moments, admiring its effect, and contemplating the dark mountains as they stood out against the firmament, then kindled into magnificent grandeur by the myriads of stars that glowed in its expanse. There was perfect silence and solitude around me; and, as I stood alone in the dark chamber of the mountains, I felt the impressiveness of the situation gradually supersede my terrors. A sublime sense of religious awe descended on me; my soul kindled into a glow of solemn and elevated devotion, which gave me a more intimate perception of the presence of God than

I had ever before experienced. "How sacred —how awful," thought I, "is this place! how impressive is this hour!—surely I feel myself at the footstool of God! The voice of worship is in this deep, soul-thrilling silence, and the tongue of praise speaks, as it were, from the very solitude of the mountains!" I then thought of Him who went up into a mountain-top to pray, and felt the majesty of those admirable descriptions of the Almighty, given in the Old Testament, blend in delightful harmony with the beauty and fitness of the Christian dispensation, that brought life and immortality to light. "Here," said I, "do I feel that I am indeed immortal, and destined for scenes of a more exalted and comprehensive existence!"

I then proceeded farther into the valley, completely freed from the influence of old and superstitious associations. A few perches below me, a small river crossed the road, over which was thrown a little stone bridge of rude workmanship. This bridge was the spot on which the apparition was said to appear; and as I approached it, I felt the folly of those terrors which had only a few minutes before beset me so strongly. I found my moral energies recruited, and the dark phantasms of my imagination dispelled by the light of religion, which had refreshed me with a deep sense of the Almighty presence. I accordingly walked forward, scarcely bestowing a thought upon the history of the place, and had got within a few yards of the bridge, when on resting my eye

accidentally upon the little elevation formed by its rude arch, I perceived a black coffin placed at the edge of the road, exactly upon the bridge itself!

It may be evident to the reader that, however satisfactory the force of philosophical reasoning might have been upon the subject of the solitude, I was too much the creature of sensation for an hour before, to look on such a startling object with firm nerves. For the first two or three minutes, therefore, I exhibited as finished a specimen of the dastardly as could be imagined. My hair absolutely raised my cap some inches off my head; my mouth opened to an extent which I did not conceive it could possibly reach; I thought my eyes shot out from their sockets, and my fingers spread out and became stiff, though powerless. The "*obstupui*" was perfectly realized in me, for, with the exception of a single groan, which I gave on first seeing the object, I found that if one word would save my life, or transport me to my own fireside, I could not utter it. I was also rooted to the earth, as if by magic; and although instant tergiversation and flight had my most hearty concurrence, I could not move a limb, nor even raise my eyes off the sepulchral-looking object which lay before me. I now felt the perspiration fall from my face in torrents, and the strokes of my heart fell audibly on my ears. I even attempted to say "God preserve me!" but my tongue was dumb and paralyzed, and could not move. My eye was still upon the coffin, when I perceived that,

from being motionless, it instantly began to swing—first in a lateral, then in a longitudinal direction, although it was perfectly evident that no human hand was nearer it than my own. At length I raised my eyes off it, for my vision was strained to an aching intensity, which I thought must have occasioned my eye-strings to crack. I looked instinctively about me for assistance — but all was dismal, silent, and solitary: even the moon had disappeared among a few clouds that I had not noticed in the sky.

As I stood in this state of indescribable horror, I saw the light gradually fade away from the tops of the mountains, giving the scene around me a dim and spectral ghastliness, which to those who were never in such a situation is altogether inconceivable.

At length I thought I heard a noise as it were of a rushing tempest, sweeping from the hills down into the valley; but on looking up, I could perceive nothing but the dusky desolation that brooded over the place. Still the noise continued; again I saw the coffin move; I then felt the motion communicated to myself, and found my body borne and swung backwards and forwards, precisely according to the motion of the coffin. I again attempted to utter a cry for assistance, but could not: the motion in my body still continued, as did the approaching noise in the hills. I looked up a second time in the direction in which the valley wound off between them, but, judge of what I must have suffered, when I beheld one of the

mountains moving, as it were, from its base, and tumbling down towards the spot on which I stood! In the twinkling of an eye the whole scene, hills and all, began to tremble, to vibrate, and to fly round me, with a rapid, delirious motion; the stars shot back into the depths of heaven, and disappeared; the ground on which I stood began to pass from beneath my feet; a noise like the breaking of a thousand gigantic billows again burst from every direction, and I found myself instantly overwhelmed by some deadly weight, which prostrated me on the earth, and deprived me of sense and motion.

I know not how long I continued in this state; but I remember that, on opening my eyes, the first object that presented itself to me was the sky glowing as before with ten thousand stars, and the moon walking in her unclouded brightness through the heavens. The whole circumstance then rushed back upon my mind, but with a sense of horror very much diminished; I arose, and on looking towards the spot, perceived the coffin in the same place. I then stood, and endeavouring to collect myself, viewed it as calmly as possible; it was, however, as motionless and distinct as when I first saw it. I now began to reason upon the matter, and to consider that it was pusillanimous in me to give way to such [illegible] terrors. The confidence, I [illegible] my heart, only a few times before this, had [illegible] in the presence and protection of the Almighty, [illegible] returned, [illegible] horrors, which [illegible] my whole system.

"Well," thought I, "in the name of God I shall ascertain what you are, let the consequence be what it may." I then advanced until I stood exactly over it, and raising my foot gave it a slight kick. "Now," said I, "nothing remains but to ascertain whether it contains a dead body or not;" but on raising the end of it, I perceived by its lightness that it was empty. To investigate the cause of its being left in this solitary spot was, however, not within the compass of my philosophy, so I gave that up. On looking at it more closely, I noticed a plate, marked with the name and age of the person for whom it was intended, and on bringing my eyes near the letters, I was able, between fingering and reading, to make out the name of my old cudgel-fighting school-fellow, Denis Kelly.

This discovery threw a partial light upon the business; but I now remembered to have heard of individuals who had seen black, unearthly coffins, inscribed with the names of certain living persons; and that these were considered as ominous of the death of those persons. I accordingly determined to be certain that this was a real coffin; and as Denis's house was not more than a mile before me, I decided on carrying it that far: "If he be dead," thought I, "it will be all right, and if not, we will see more about it." My mind, in fact, was diseased by terror. I instantly raised the coffin, and as I found a rope lying on the ground under it, I strapped it about my shoulders and proceeded: nor could I help

smiling when I reflected upon the singular transition which the man of sentiment and sensation so strangely underwent;—from the sublime contemplation of the silent mountain solitude and the spangled heavens to the task of carrying a coffin! It was an adventure, however, and I was resolved to see how it would terminate.

There was from the bridge an ascent in the road, not so gradual as that by which I descended on the other side; and as the coffin was rather heavy, I began to repent of having anything to do with it; for I was by no means experienced in carrying coffins. The carriage of it was, indeed, altogether an irksome and unpleasant concern; for owing to my ignorance of using the rope that tied it skilfully, it was every moment sliding down my back, dragging along the stones, or bumping against my heels: besides, I saw no sufficient grounds I had for entering upon the ludicrous and odd employment of carrying another man's coffin, and was several times upon the point of washing my hands out of it altogether. But the novelty of the incident, and the mystery in which it was involved, decided me in bringing it as far as Kelly's house, which was exactly on my way home.

I had yet half a mile to go; but I thought it would be best to strap it more firmly about my body before I could start again: I therefore set it standing on its end, just at the turn of the road, until I should breathe a little, for I was rather exhausted by a trudge under it of half

a mile and upwards. Whilst the coffin was in this position, I standing exactly behind it (Kelly had been a tall man, consequently it was somewhat higher than I was), a crowd of people, bearing lights, advanced round the corner; and the first object which presented itself to their vision, was the coffin in that position, whilst I was totally invisible behind it. As soon as they saw it, there was an involuntary cry of consternation from the whole crowd; at this time I had the coffin once more strapped firmly by a running knot to my shoulders, so that I could loose it whenever I pleased. On seeing the party, and hearing certain expressions which dropped from them, I knew at once that there had been some unlucky blunder in the business on their part; and I would have given a good deal to be out of the circumstances in which I then stood. I felt that I could not possibly have accounted for my situation, without bringing myself in for as respectable a portion of rank cowardice as those who ran away from the coffin; for that it was left behind in a fit of terror, I now entertained no doubt whatever, particularly when I remembered the traditions connected with the spot in which I found it.

Maniim a Yea agus a scurrah!" exclaimed one of them, "if the black man hasn't brought it up from the bridge! *Dhee a hanna heena*, he did; for it was above the bridge we first seen him: jist for all the world—the Lord be about us—as Antony and me war coming out on the road at the bridge, there he was standing—a

headless man, all black, widout face or eyes upon him—and then we left the coffin and cut acrass the fields home."

"But where is he now, Eman?" said one of them; "are you sure you seen him?"

"Seen him!" both exclaimed, "do you think we'd take to our scrapers like two hares, only we did; arrah, bad manners to you, do you think the coffin could walk up wid itself from the bridge to this, only he brought it?—isn't that enough?"

"Thrue for yez," the rest exclaimed, "but what's to be done?"

"Why to bring the coffin home, now that we're all together," another observed; "they say he never appears to more than two at wanst, so he won't be apt to show himself now, when we're together."

"Well, boys, let two of you go down to it," said one of them, "and we'll wait here till yez bring it up."

"Yes," said Eman Dhu, "do you go down, Owen, as you have the Scapular on you, and the jug of holy water in your hand, and let Billy M'Shane, here, repate the *confeckur* along wid you."

"Isn't it the same thing, Eman," replied Owen, "if I shake the holy water on you, and whoever goes wid you? sure you know that if only one dhrop of it touched you, the devil himself couldn't harm you!"

"And what need you can't be afraid, then," retorted Eman; "an I you have the Scapular on you to the back of that? Didn't you say, as

you war coming out, that if it *was* the devil, you'd disparse him?"

"You had betther not be mintioning his name, you *omadhaun*," replied the other; "if I was your age, and hadn't a wife and childher on my hands, it's myself that would trust in God, and go down manfully; but the people are hen-hearted now, besides what they used to be in my time."

During this conversation, I had resolved, if possible, to keep up the delusion, until I could get myself extricated with due secrecy out of this ridiculous situation; and I was glad to find that, owing to their cowardice, there was some likelihood of effecting my design.

"Ned," said one of them to a little man, "go down and speak to it, as it can't harm *you*."

"Why, sure," said Ned, with a tremor in his voice, "I can speak to it where I am, widout going within rache of it. Boys, stay close to me: hem—In the name of—but don't you think I had betther spake to it in the Latin I *sarve mass* wid; it can't but answer that, for the *sowl* of it, seeing it's a blest language?"

"Very well," the rest replied; "try that, Ned; give it the best and ginteelest grammar you have, and maybe it may thrate us dacent."

Now it so happened that, in my school-boy days, I had joined a class of young fellows who were learning what is called the "*Sarvin' of Mass*", and had impressed it so accurately on a pretty retentive memory that I never forgot it. At length, Ned pulled out his beads, and

bedewed himself most copiously with the holy water. He then shouted out, with a voice which resembled that of a man in an ague fit: "*Dom-i-n-us vo-bis-cum?*" "*Et cum spiritu tuo,*" I replied, in a husky sepulchral tone, from behind the coffin. As soon as I uttered these words, the whole crowd ran back instinctively with fright; and Ned got so weak that they were obliged to support him.

"Lord have marcy on us!" said Ned; "boys, isn't it an awful thing to speak to a spirit? my hair is like I dunna what, it's sticking up so stiff upon my head."

"Spake to it in English, Ned," said they, "till we hear what it will say. Ax it does anything trouble it; or whether its *soxel's* in Purgatory."

"Wouldn't it be better," observed another, "to ax it who murdhered it; maybe it wants to discover that?"

"In the—na-me of—Go-o-d-ness," said Ned, down to me, "what are you?"

"I'm the soul," I replied, in the same voice, "of the peddlar that was murdered on the bridge below."

"An I—who—was—it, sur, wid—submission, that—murdhered—you?"

To this I made no reply.

"I say," continued Ned, "in—the—name—of—[illegible]—who was it—that took the liberty of murdhering you, divent man?"

"Ned Corrigan," I [illegible] Ned Corrigan."

he exclaimed. "What Ned, for there's two of them—Is it myself, or the *other* vagabone?"

"Yourself, you murderer!" I replied.

"Ho!" said Ned, getting quite stout, "is that you, neighbour? Come, now, walk out wid yourself out of that coffin, you vagabone you, whoever you are."

"What do you mane, Ned, by spaking to it that-a-way?" the rest enquired.

"Hut," said Ned, "it's some fellow or other that's playing a thrick upon us. Sure I never knew either act nor part of the murdher, nor of the murdherers; and you know, if it was anything of that nature, it couldn't tell me a lie, and me a Scapularian, along wid axing it in God's name, wid Father Feasthalagh's Latin."

"Big tare-an'-ouns!" said the rest; "if we thought it was any man making fun of us, but we'd crop the ears off his head, to tache him to be joking!"

To tell the truth, when I heard this suggestion, I began to repent of my frolic; but I was determined to make another effort to finish the adventure creditably.

"Ned," said they, "throw some of the holy water on us all, and in the name of St. Pether and the Blessed Virgin, we'll go down and examine it in a body."

This they considered a good thought, and Ned was sprinkling the water about him in all directions, whilst he repeated some jargon which was completely unintelligible. They then began to approach the coffin at dead-march time, and I felt that this was the only

moment in which my plan could succeed; for had I waited until they came down, all would have been discovered. As soon, therefore, as they began to move towards me, I also began, with equal solemnity, to retrograde towards *them*; so that, as the coffin was between us, it seemed to move without human means.

"Stop, for God's sake, stop," shouted Ned; "it's movin'! It has made the coffin alive; don't you see it thravelling this way widout hand or foot, barring the boords?"

There was now a halt to ascertain the fact: but I still retrograded. This was sufficient; a cry of terror broke from the whole group, and, without waiting for further evidence, they set off in the direction they came from, at full speed, Ned flinging the jug of holy water at the coffin, lest the latter should follow, or the former encumber him in his flight. Never was there so complete a discomfiture; and so eager were they to escape that several of them came down on the stones; and I could hear them shouting with desperation, and imploring the more advanced not to leave them behind. I instantly disentangled myself from the coffin, and left it standing exactly in the middle of the road, for the next passenger to give it a lift as far as Denis Kelly's, if he felt so disposed. I lost no time in making the best of my way home; and on passing poor Denis's house I perceived, by the bustle and noise within, that he was dead.

I had seen my friends no more of this world, but my adventure was consequently the

warmer, as I was not expected. That evening was a happy one, which I shall long remember. At supper I alluded to Kelly, and received from my brother a full account, as given in the following narrative, of the circumstances which caused his death.

"I need not remind you, Toby, of our school-boy days, nor of the principles usually imbibed at such schools as that in which the two tiny factions of the Caseys and the Murphys qualified themselves, among the latter of whom you cut so distinguished a figure. You will not, therefore, be surprised to hear that these two factions are as bitter as ever; and that the boys who at Pat Mulligan's school belaboured each other, in imitation of their brothers and fathers, continue to set the same iniquitous example to their children; so that this groundless and hereditary enmity is likely to descend to future generations; unless, indeed, the influence of a more enlightened system of education may check it. But, unhappily, there is a strong suspicion of the object proposed by such a system; so that the advantages likely to result from it to the lower orders of the people will be slow and distant."

"But, John," said I, "now that we are upon that subject, let me ask what really *is* the bone of contention between Irish factions?"

"I assure you," he replied, "I am almost as much at a loss, Toby, to give you a satisfactory answer, as if you asked me the elevation of the highest mountain on the moon; and I believe you would find equal difficulty in ascertaining

the cause of their feuds from the factions themselves. I really am convinced they know not, nor, if I rightly understand them, do they much care. Their object is to fight, and the turning of a straw will at any time furnish them with sufficient grounds for that. I do not think, after all, that the enmity between them is purely personal: they do not hate each other individually; but having originally had one quarrel upon some trifling occasion, the beaten party cannot bear the stigma of defeat without another trial of strength. Then, if they succeed, the *onus* of retrieving lost credit is thrown upon the party that was formerly victorious. If they fail a second time, the double triumph of their conquerors excites them to a greater determination to throw off the additional disgrace; and this species of alternation perpetuates the evil.

"These habits, however, familiarize our peasantry to acts of outrage and violence—the bad passions are cultivated and nourished, until crimes, which peaceable men look upon with fear and horror, lose their real magnitude and deformity in the eyes of Irishmen. I believe this kind of undefined hatred between either parties or nations is the most dangerous and fatal spirit which can pervade any portion of society. If you hate a man for an obvious and palpable injury, it is likely that when he [illegible] that injury by an act of subsequent kindness, accompanied by an exhibition of [illegible], you will cease to look upon him as your enemy; but where the hatred is

such that, while feeling it, you cannot, on a sober examination of your heart, account for it, there is little hope that you will ever be able to stifle the enmity which you entertain against him. This, however, in politics and religion, is what is frequently designated as principle—a word on which men, possessing higher and greater advantages than the poor ignorant peasantry of Ireland, pride themselves. In sects and parties, we may mark its effects among all ranks and nations. I, therefore, seldom wish, Toby, to hear a man assert that he is of this party or that, from *principle*, for I am usually inclined to suspect that he is not, in this case, influenced by *conviction*.

"Kelly was a man who, but for these scandalous proceedings among us, might have been now alive and happy. Although his temperament was warm, yet that warmth communicated itself to his good as well as to his evil qualities. In the beginning his family were not attached to any faction—and when I use the word *faction*, it is in contradistinction to the word *party*—for faction, you know, is applied to a feud or grudge between Roman Catholics exclusively. But when he was young, he ardently attached himself to the Murphys; and, having continued among them until manhood, he could not abandon them consistently with that sense of mistaken honour which forms so prominent a feature in the character of the Irish peasantry. But although the Kellys were not *faction-men*, they were bitter *party-men*, being the ringleaders of every quarrel

which took place between the Catholics and Protestants, or, I should rather say, between the Orangemen and Whiteboys.

"From the moment Denis attached himself to the Murphys, until the day he received the beating which subsequently occasioned his death, he never withdrew from them. He was in all their battles; and in course of time, induced his relations to follow his example: so that, by general consent, they were nicknamed 'the Errigle Slashers'. Soon after you left the country, and went to reside with my uncle, Denis married a daughter of little Dick Magrath's, from the Race-road, with whom he got a little money. She proved a kind, affectionate wife; and, to do him justice, I believe he was an excellent husband. Shortly after his marriage his father died, and Denis succeeded him in his farm; for you know that, among the peasantry, the youngest generally gets the landed property—the elder children being obliged to provide for themselves according to their ability, as otherwise a population would multiply upon a portion of land inadequate to its support.

"It was supposed that Kelly's marriage would have been the means of producing a change in him for the better, but it did not. He was, in fact, the slave of a low, vain ambition, which constantly occasioned him to have some quarrel or other on his hands; and, as he possessed great physical courage and strength, he became the champion of the parish. It was in vain that his wife used

every argument to induce him to relinquish such practices; the only reply he was in the habit of making was a good-humoured slap on the back and a laugh, saying:

"'That's it, Honor; sure and isn't that the Magraths, all over, that would let the manest spalpeen that ever chewed cheese thramp upon them, without raising a hand in their own defence; and I don't blame you for being a coward, seeing that you have their blood in your veins—not but that there ought to be something betther in you, afther all; for it's the M'Karrons, by your mother's side, that had the good dhrop of their own in them, anyhow—but you're a Magrath, out and out.'

"'And, Denis,' Honor would reply, 'it would be a blessed day for the parish, if all in it were as peaceable as the same Magraths. There would be no sore heads, nor broken bones, nor fighting, nor slashing of one another in fairs and markets, when people ought to be minding their business. You're ever and always at the Magraths, bekase they don't join you agin the Caseys or the Orangemen, and more fools they'd be to make or meddle between you, having no spite agin either of them; and it would be wiser for you to be *sed* by the Magraths, and *red* your hands out of sich ways altogether. What did ever the Murphys do to sarve you or any of your family, that you'd go to make a great man of yourself fighting for them? Or what did the poor Caseys do to make you go agin the honest people? Arrah, bad manners to me, if you

know what you're about, or if *sense* or grace can ever come of it; and mind my words, Denis, if God hasn't sed it, you'll live to rue your folly for the same work.'

"At this Denis would laugh heartily. 'Well said, Honor *Magrath*, but not *Kelly*. Well, it's one comfort that our childher aren't likely to follow your side of the house, anyway. Come here, Lanty; come over, acushla, to your father! Lanty, ma bouchal, what 'ill you do when you grow a man?'

"'I'll buy a horse of my own to ride on, daddy.'

"'A horse, Lanty! and so you will, ma bouchal; but that's not it—sure that's not what I mane, Lanty. What 'ill you do to the Caseys?'

"'Ho, ho! the Caseys! I'll bate the blackguards wid your blackthorn, daddy!'

"'Ha, ha, ha! that's my stout man, my brave little soger! *Wan dhe lamb, avick!—give me your hand, my son!* Here, Nelly,' he would say to the child's eldest sister, 'give him a brave whang of bread, to make him able to bate the Caseys. Well, Lanty, who more will you lather, achoor?'

"'Ah, the Grangemen; I'll kill all the Grangemen!'

"This would be just another laugh from the farmer. He would again [illegible] and shake his [illegible] for these early manifestations [illegible]

"'[illegible] Nelly, [illegible] Lanty,' and [illegible]

Kelly, every blessed inch of you! and if you turn out as good a *buillagh batthak* as your father afore you, I'll be contint, avourneen!'

"'God forgive you, Denis,' the wife would reply, 'it's long before you'd think of larning him his prayers, or his catechiz, or anything that's good! Lanty, agra, come over to myself, and never heed what that man says; for, except you have some poor body's blessing, he'll bring you to no good.'

"Sometimes, however, Kelly's own natural good sense, joined with the remonstrances of his wife, prevailed for a short time, and he would withdraw himself from the connection altogether; but the force of habit and of circumstances was too strong in him, to hope that he could ever overcome it by his own firmness, for he was totally destitute of religion. The peaceable intervals of his life were therefore very short.

"One summer evening I was standing in my own garden, when I saw a man galloping up towards me at full speed. When he approached, I recognized him as one of the Murphy faction, and perceived that he was cut and bleeding.

"'Murphy,' said I, 'what's the matter?'

"'Hard fighting, sir,' said he, 'is the matter. The Caseys gathered all their faction, bekase they heard that Denis Kelly has given us up, and they're sweeping the street wid us. I'm going hot foot for Kelly, sir, for even the very name of him will turn the tide in our favour. Along wid that I have sint in a score of the

say another word,' said he, seeing me about to speak; 'for by Him that made me we'll do it! If any man, I say, could persuade me agin it, you could; but, if we don't pay them full interest for what we got, why, my name's not Denis Kelly—ay, sweep them like varmint out of the town, body and sleeves!'

"I saw argument would be lost on him, so I only observed that I feared it would eventually end badly.

"'Och, many and many's the time, Mr. D'Arcy,' said Honor, 'I prophesied the same thing; and, if God hasn't said it, he'll be coming home a corpse to me some day or other; for he got as much bating, sir, as would be enough to kill a horse; and, to tell you God's truth, sir, he's breeding up his childher—'

"'Honor,' said Kelly, irritated, 'whatever I do, do I lave it in your power to say that I'm a bad husband? so don't *rise* me by your talk, for I don't like to be provoked. I *know* it's wrong, but what can I do? Would you have me for to show the *Garran-bane*, and lave them like a cowardly thraitor, now that the other faction is coming up to be their match? No; let what will come of it, I'll never do the mane thing—death before dishonour!'

"In this manner Kelly went on for years; sometimes, indeed, keeping quiet for a short period, but eventually drawn in, from the circumstance of being surrounded with want

of honour and truth to his connection. This, truly, is an imputation which no peasant could endure; nor, were he thought capable of treachery, would he be safe from the vengeance of his own party. Many a time have I seen Kelly reeling home, his head and face sadly cut, the blood streaming from him, and his wife and some neighbour on each side of him — the poor woman weeping and deploring the senseless and sanguinary feuds in which her husband took so active a part.

"About three miles from this, down at the Long Ridge, where the Shannons live, dwelt a family of the Grogans, cousins to Denis. They were anything but industrious, although they might have lived very independently, having held a farm on what they call an *old take*, which means a long lease taken out when the lands were cheap. It so happened, however, that, like too many of their countrymen, they paid little attention to the cultivation of their farm; the consequence of which neglect was, that they became embarrassed, and overburdened with arrears. Their landlord was old Sam Simmons, whose only fault to his tenants was an excess of indulgence, and a generous disposition wherever he could possibly get an opportunity to scatter his money about him, upon the spur of a benevolence which, it would seem, never ceased goading him to acts of the most Christian liberality and kindness. Along with these excellent qualities, he was remarkable for a most rooted

aversion to law and lawyers; for he would lose one hundred pounds rather than recover that sum by legal proceedings, even when certain that five pounds would effect it; but he seldom or never was known to pardon a breach of the peace.

"I have always found that an *excess* of indulgence in a landlord never fails ultimately to injure and relax the industry of the tenant; at least, this was the effect which *his* forbearance produced on them. But the most extraordinary good-nature has its limits, and so had his; after repeated warning, and the most unparalleled patience on his part, he was at length compelled to determine on at once removing them from his estate, and letting his land to some more efficient and deserving tenant. He accordingly desired them to remove their property from the premises, as he did not wish, he said, to leave them without the means of entering upon another farm, if they felt so disposed. This they refused to do; adding that they would, at least, put him to the expense of ejecting them. He then gave orders to his agent to serve; but they, in the meantime, had secreted their effects by night among their friends and relations, sending a cow to this one and a horse to that; so that when the bailiff came to levy his execution, he found very little, except the empty wall. They were, however, ejected without ceremony, and driven altogether off the farm, for which they had actually paid nothing for the three preceding years. In the meantime the farm was advertised to be let,

and several persons had offered themselves as tenants; but what appeared very remarkable was, that the Roman Catholics seldom came a second time to make any further enquiry about it; or, if they did, Simmons observed that they were sure to withdraw their proposals, and ultimately decline having anything to do with it.

"This was a circumstance which he could not properly understand; but the fact was, that the peasantry were almost to a man members of a widely-extending system of agrarian combination, the secret influence of which intimidated such of their own religion as intended to take it, and prevented them from exposing themselves to the penalty which they knew those who should dare to occupy it must pay. In a short time, however, the matter began to be whispered about, until it spread gradually, day after day, through the parish, that those who already had proposed, or intended to propose, were afraid to enter upon the land on any terms. Hitherto, it is true, these threats floated about only in the vague form of rumour.

"The farm had been now unoccupied for about a year; party spirit ran very high among the peasantry, and no proposals came in, or were at all likely to come. Simmons then got advertisements printed, and had them posted up in the most conspicuous parts of this and the neighbouring parishes. It was expected, however, that they would be torn down; but, instead of that, there was a written notice

posted up immediately under each, which ran in the following words:—

"'TAKE NOTESS.

"'*Any man that'll dare to take the farm belonging to smooth Sam Simmons, and sitiuated at the long ridge, will be flayed alive.*

"'MAT MIDNIGHT.

"'B.N.—*It's it that was latterrally occupied by the Grogans.*'

"This occasioned Simmons and the other magistrates of the barony to hold a meeting, at which they subscribed to the amount of fifty pounds as a reward for discovering the author or authors of the threatening notice; but the advertisement containing the reward, which was posted in the usual places through the parish, was torn down on the first night after it was put up. In the meantime, a man, nicknamed Vengeance—Vesey Vengeance, in consequence of his daring and fearless spirit, and his bitterness in retaliating injury—came to Simmons, and proposed for the farm. The latter candidly mentioned the circumstances of the notice, and fairly told him that he was running a personal risk in taking it.

"'Leave that to me, sir,' said Vengeance; 'if you will set me the farm at the terms I offer, I am willing to become your tenant; and let them that posted up the notices go to old Nick, or, if they annoy me, let them take care

I don't send them there. I am a *true-blue*, si
—a *purple man*—have lots of firearms, and
plenty of stout fellows in the parish ready and
willing to back me; and, by the light of day!
if they make or meddle with me or mine, we
will hunt them in the face of the world, like so
many mad dogs, out of the country: what are
hey but a pack of *ribles*, that would cut our
hroats, if they dared?'

"'I have no objection,' said Simmons, 'that
-u should express a firm determination to
defend your life and protect your property;
but I utterly condemn the spirit with which
you seem to be animated. Be temperate and
sober, but be firm. I will afford you every
assistance and protection in my power, both as
a magistrate and a landlord; but if you speak
so incautiously, the result may be serious, if
not fatal, to yourself.'

"'Instead of that,' said Vengeance, 'the
more a man appears to be afeard, the more
danger he is in, as I know by what I have seen;
but, at any rate, if they injure me, I wouldn't
ask better sport than taking down the ribles—
the bloody-minded villains! Isn't it a purty
thing that a man darn't put one foot past the
other only as *they* wish? By the light o' day,
I'll pepper them!'

"Shortly after this, Vengeance, braving all
heir threats, removed to the farm, and set
bout its cultivation with skill and vigour. He
d not been long there, however, when a notice
s posted one night on his door, giving him
days to clear off from this interdicted spot,

threatening, in case of non-compliance, to make a bonfire of the house and offices, inmates included. The reply which Vengeance made to this was fearless and characteristic. He wrote another notice, which he posted on the chapel-door, stating that he would not budge an inch —recommending, at the same time, such as intended paying him a nightly visit to be careful that they might not chance to go home with their heels foremost. This, indeed, was setting them completely at defiance, and would, no doubt, have been fatal to Vesey, were it not for a circumstance which I will now relate:—In a little dell, below Vesey's house, lived a poor woman, called Doran, a widow; she inhabited a small hut, and was principally supported by her two sons, who were servants, one to a neighbouring farmer, a Roman Catholic, and the other to Dr. Ableson, rector of the parish. He who had been with the rector lost his health shortly before Vengeance succeeded the Grogans as occupier of the land in question, and was obliged to come home to his mother. He was then confined to his bed, from which, indeed, he never rose.

"This boy had been his mother's principal support—for the other was unsettled, and paid her but little attention, being, like most of those in his situation, fond of drinking, dancing, and attending fairs. In short, he became a Ribbonman, and consequently was obliged to attend their nightly meetings. Now it so happened that for a considerable time after the threatening notice had been posted on Ven-

geance's door, he received no annoyance, although the period allowed for his departure had been long past, and the purport of the paper unlimited with. Whether this proceeded from an apprehension on the part of the Ribbonmen of receiving a warmer welcome than they might wish, or whether they deferred the execution of their threat until Vengeance might be off his guard, I cannot determine; but the fact is, that some months had elapsed and Vengeance remained hitherto unmolested.

"During this interval the distress of Widow Doran had become known to the inmates of his family, and his mother—for she lived with him—used to bring down each day some nourishing food to the sick boy. In these kind offices she was very punctual; and so great was the poverty of the poor widow, and so destitute the situation of her sick son, that, in fact, the burden of their support lay principally upon Vengeance's family.

"Vengeance was a small, thin man, with fair hair, and fiery eyes; his voice was loud and shrill, his utterance rapid, and the general expression of his countenance irritable. His motions were so quick that he rather seemed to run than walk. He was a civil, obliging neighbour, but performed his best actions with a bad grace; a firm, unflinching friend, but a bitter and implacable enemy. Upon the whole, he was generally esteemed and respected—though considered as an eccentric character, for such, indeed, he was. On hearing of Widow Doran's distress, he gave orders that a portion

of each meal should be regularly sent down to her and her son; and from that period forward they were both supported principally from his table.

"In this way some months had passed, and still Vengeance was undisturbed in his farm. It often happened, however, that Doran's other son came to see his brother; and during these visits it was but natural that his mother and brother should allude to the kindness which they daily experienced from Vesey.

"One night, about twelve o'clock, a tap came to Widow Doran's door, who happened to be attending the invalid, as he was then nearly in the last stage of his illness. When she opened it, the other son entered, in an evident hurry, having the appearance of a man who felt deep and serious anxiety.

"'Mother,' said he, 'I was very uneasy entirely about Mick, and just started over to see him, although they don't know at home that I'm out, so I can't stay a crack; but I wish you would go to the door for two or three minutes, as I have something to say to *him*.'

"'Why, thin, Holy Mother!—Jack, a-hagur, is there anything the matther, for you look as if *you had seen something*?'

"'Nothing worse than myself, mother,' he replied; 'nor there's nothing the matther at all—only I have a few words to say to Mick here, that's all.'

"The mother accordingly removed herself out of hearing.

"'Mick,' say the boy, 'this is a bad busi-

ness—I wish to God I was clear and clane out of it.'

"'What is it?' said Mick, alarmed.

"'Murther, I'm afeard, if God doesn't turn it off of them, somehow.'

"'What do you mane, man, at all?' said the invalid, raising himself, in deep emotion, on his elbow, from his poor straw bed.

"'Vengeance,' said he—'Vengeance, man—he's going to get it. I was out with the boys on Sunday evening, and *at last* it's agreed on to visit him to-morrow night. I'm sure and sartin he'll never escape, for there's more *in* for him than taking the farm, and daring them so often as he did—he shot two fingers off of a brother-in-law of Jem Reilly's one night that they war *on* for threshing him, and that's coming home to him along with the rest.'

"'In the name of God, Jack,' enquired Mick, 'what do they intend to do to him?'

"'Why,' replied Jack, 'it's agreed to put a coal in the thatch, in the first place; and although they were afeard to name what he's to get besides, I doubt they'll make a spatchcock of *himself*. They won't meddle with any other of the family, though—but *he's doxen* for it.'

"'Are *you* to be one of them?' asked Mick.

"'I was the third man named,' replied the other, 'bekase, they said, I knew the place.'

"'Jack,' said his emaciated brother with much solemnity, raising himself up in the bed—'Jack, if you have act or part in that bloody business, God in his glory you'll never see.

Fly the country—cut off a finger or toe—break your arm—or do something that may prevent you from being there. Oh, my God!' he exclaimed, whilst the tears fell fast down his pale cheeks—'to go to murder the man, and lave his little family widout a head or a father over them, and his wife a widow! To burn his place, widout rhime, or rason, or offince! Jack, if you go, I'll die cursing you. I'll appear to you—I'll let you rest neither night nor day, sleeping nor waking, in bed or out of bed. I'll haunt you, till you'll curse the very hour you war born.'

"Whist, Micky,' said Jack, 'you're frightening me: I'll not go—will that satisfy you?'

"'Well, dhrop down on your two knees, there,' said Micky, 'and swear before the God that has his eye upon you this minute, that you'll have no hand in injuring him or his, while you live. If you don't do this, I'll not rest in my grave, and maybe I'll be a corpse before mornin'.'

"'Well, Micky,' said Jack, who, though wild and unthinking, was a lad whose heart and affections were good, 'it would be hard for me to refuse you that much, and you not likely to be long wid me—I will;' and he accordingly knelt down and swore solemnly, in words which his brother dictated to him, that he would not be concerned in the intended murder.

"'Now, give me your hand, Jack,' said the invalid; 'God bless you—and so he will. Jack, if I dey[illegible] before I see you again, I'll die

happy. That man has supported me and my mother for near the last three months, bad as you all think him. Why, Jack, we would both be dead of hunger long ago, only for his family; and, my God! to think of such a murdhering intention makes my blood run cowld—'

"'You had better give him a hint then,' said Jack, 'some way, or he'll be done for, as sure as you're stretched on that bed; but don't mintion names, if you wish to keep me from being murdhered for what I did. I must be off now, for I stole out of the barn; and only that Atty Laghy's gone along wid the master to the —— fair, to help him to sell the two coults, I couldn't get over at all.'

"'Well, go home, Jack, and God bless you, and so he will for what you did this night.'

"Jack accordingly departed, after bidding his mother and brother farewell.

"When the old woman came in, she asked her son if there was anything wrong with his brother, but he replied that there was not.

"'Nothing at all,' said he—'but will you go up airly in the morning, plase God, and tell Vesey Johnston that I want to see him; and—that—I have a great dale to say to him.'

"'To be sure I will, Micky; but, Lord guard us, what ails you, avourneen, you look so frightened?'

"'Nothing at all, at all, mother; but will you go where I say airly to-morrow, for me?'

"'It's the first thing I'll do, God willin',' replied the mother. And the next morning Vesey was down with the invalid very early,

for the old woman kept her word, and paid him a timely visit.

"'Well, Micky, my boy,' said Vengeance, as he entered the hut, 'I hope you're no worse this morning.'

"'Not worse, Sir,' replied Mick; 'nor, indeed, am I anything better either, but much the same way. Sure it's I that knows very well that my time here is but short.'

"'Well, Mick, my boy,' said Vengeance, 'I hope you're prepared for death—and that you expect forgiveness, like a Christian. Look up, my boy, to God at once, and pitch the priests and their craft to ould Nick, where they'll all go at the long-run.'

"'I b'lieve,' said Mick with a faint smile, 'that you're not very fond of the priests, Mr. Johnston; but if you knew the power they possess as well as I do, you wouldn't spake of them so bad, anyhow.'

"'Me fond of them!' replied the other; 'why, man, they're a set of the most gluttonous, black-looking hypocrites that ever walked on neat's leather; and ought to be hunted out of the country—hunted out of the country, by the light of day! every one of them; for they do nothing but egg up the people against the 'rote-tant.'

"'God help you, Mr. Johnston,' replied the sick, 'I pity you from my heart for the opinion you hould about them. I suppose if you were attack dead on the spot with a fever on the fever, that you that a priest wouldn't see you by one word spaking?'

"'Cure me!' said Vengeance with a laugh of disdain; 'by the light of day! if I caught one of them curing me, I'd give him the purtiest chase you ever saw in your life, across the hills.'

"'Don't you know,' said Mick, 'that priest Dannelly cured Bob Beaty of the falling sickness—until he broke the vow that was laid upon him, of not going into a church, and the minute he crossed the church-door, didn't he dhrop down as bad as ever—and what could the minister do for him?'

"'And don't *you* know,' rejoined Vengeance, 'that that's all a parcel of the most lying stuff possible; lies—lies—all lies—and vagabondism? Why, Mick, you Papishes worship the priests; you think they can bring you to heaven at a word. By the light of day, they must have good sport laughing at you, when they get among one another! Why don't they teach you and give you the Bible to read, the ribelly rascals? but they're afraid you'd know too much then.'

"'Well, Mr. Johnston,' said Mick, 'I b'lieve you'll never have a good opinion of them, at any rate.'

"'Ay, when the sky falls,' replied Vengeance; 'but you're now on your death-bed, and why don't you pitch them to ould Nick, and get a Bible? Get a Bible, man; there's a pair of them in my house, that's never used at all—except my mother's, and she's at it night and day. I'll send one of them down to you; turn yourself to God—to your Redeemer,

but me. Don't you see, man, how that peppers the priests?

"'Second: Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day.

"'Third: Thou shalt not make to thyself—no, hang it, no!—I'm out, that's the Second—very right. Third: Honour thy father and thy mother—you understand that, Mick? It means that you are bound to—to—just so—to honour your father and your mother, poor woman.'

"'My father—God be good to him!—is dead near fourteen years, sir,' replied Mick.

"'Well, in that case, Mick, you see all that's left for you is to honour your mother—although I'm not certain of that either; the Commandments make no allowance at all for death, and in that case, why, living or dead, the surest way is to respect and obey them—that is, if the thing weren't impossible. I wish we had blind George M'Girr here, Mick; although he's as great a rogue as ever escaped hemp, yet he'd beat the devil himself at a knotty point.'

"'His breath would be bad about a dying man,' observed Mick.

"'Ay, or a living one,' said Vesey; 'however, let us get on—we were at the Third. Fourth: Thou shalt do no murder.'

"At the word murder, Mick started, and gave a deep groan, whilst his eyes and features assumed a gaunt and hollow expression, resembling that of a man struck with an immediate sense of horror and affright.

"'Oh! for heaven's sake, sir, stop there,' said Doran; 'that brings to my mind the business I had with you, Mr. Johnston.'

"'What is it about?' enquired Vengeance in his usual eager manner.

"'Do you mind,' said Mick, 'that a paper was stuck one night upon your door, threatening you, if you wouldn't lave that farm you're in?'

"'I do, the bloodthirsty villains! but they knew a trick worth two of coming near me.'

"'Well,' said Mick, 'a strange man, that I never seen before, came in to me last night, and tould me, if I'd see you, to say that you would get a visit from the boys this night, and to take care of yourself.'

"'Give me the hand, Mick,' said Vengeance —'give me the hand; in spite of the priests, by the light of day, you're an honest fellow! This night, you say, they're to come? And what are the bloody wretches to do, Mick? But I needn't ask that, for I suppose it's to murder myself, and to burn my place.'

"'I'm afeard, sir, you're not far from the truth,' replied Mick; 'but, Mr. Johnston, for God's sake, don't mintion my name; for, if you do, I'll get myself what they war laying out for you—be burned in my bed, maybe.'

"'Never fear, Mick,' replied Vengeance; 'your name will never cross my lips.'

"'It's a great thing,' said Mick, 'that would make me turn informer; but sure, only for your kindness and the goodness of your family, the Lord spare you to one another! mightn't

"Well, Lachlin," said my brother, "what's the matter?"

"Why, sir," said Lachlin, scratching his head, "I had a bit of a favour to ax, if it would be plasin' to you to grant it to me."

"What is that?" said my brother.

"Do you know, sir," said he, "I haven't been at a wake—let us see—this two or three years, anyhow; and, if you'd have no objection, why, I'd slip up awhile to Denis Kelly's; he's a distant relation of my own, sir; and blood's thicker than wather, you know."

"I'm just glad you came in, Lachlin," said my brother; "I didn't think of you; take a chair here, and never heed the wake to-night, but sit down and tell us about the attack on Vesey Vengeance, long ago. I'll get you a tumbler of punch; and, instead of going to the wake, I will allow you to go to the funeral to-morrow."

"Ah, sir," said Lachlin, "you know whenever the punch is consarned, I'm aisily persuaded; but not making little of your tumbler, sir," said the shrewd fellow, "I would get two or three of them if I went to the wake."

"Well, sit down," said my brother, handing him one, "and we won't permit you to get thirsty while you're talking, at all events."

"In throth, you haven't your heart in the lies of it," said Lachlin. "Gintlemen, your healthe—your health, sir, and we're happy to see you wan t more. Why, thin, I remember you, sir, when you were a poo-oon, pa-ing to school wid your satchell on your back; but,

I'll be bound you're by no means as soople now as you were thin. Why, sir," turning to my brother, "he could fly or kick football wid the rabbits.—Well, this is raal stuff!"

"Now, Lachlin," said my brother, "give us an account of the attack you made on Vesey Vengeance's house, at the Long Ridge, when all his party were chased out of the town."

"Why, thin, sir, I ought to be ashamed to mintion it; but you see, gintlemen, there was no getting over being connected wid them; but I hope your brother's *safe*, sir!"

"Oh, perfectly safe, Lachlin; you may rest assured he'll never mention it!"

"Well, sir," said Lachlin, addressing himself to me, "Vesey Vengeance was—"

"Lachlin," said my brother, "he knows all about Vesey; just give an account of the attack."

"The attack, sir! no, but the chivey we got over the mountains. Why, sir, we met in an ould empty house, you see, that belonged to the Farrells of Ballyboulteen, that went over to America that spring. There war none wid us, you may be sure, but them that war *up*; and in all we might be about sixty or seventy. The Grogans, one way or another, got it up first among them, bekase they expected that Mr. Simmons would take them back when he'd find that no one else dare venther upon their land. There war at that time two fellows down from the county Longford in their neighbourhood, of the name of Collier—although that wasn't their right name,—they were here

upon their keeping, for the murder of a proctor in their own part of the country. One of them was a tall, powerful fellow, with sandy hair, and red brows; the other was a slender chap, that must have been drawn into it by his brother—for he was very mild and innocent, and always persuaded us agin evil. The Grogans brought lashings of whisky, and made them that war to go foremost amost drunk—these war the two Colliers, some of the strangers from behind the mountains, and a son of Widdy Doran's, that knew every inch about the place, for he was bred and born jist below the house a bit. He wasn't wid us, however, in regard of his brother being *under boord* that night; but, instid of him, Tim Grogan went to show the way up the little glin to the house, though, for that matther, the most of us knew it as well as he did; but we didn't like to be the first to put a hand to it, if we could help it.

"At any rate, we sot in Farrell's empty house, drinking whisky, till they war all gathered, when about two dozen of them got the damp soot from the chimley, and rubbed it over their faces, making them so black that their own relations couldn't know them. We then went across the country in little lots, of about six or ten, or a score, and we war glad that the wake was in Widdy Doran's, seeing that, if anyone would meet us, we war going to it you know, and the blackening of the faces would pass for a frolic; but there was no great danger of being met, for it was now long beyant midnight.

"Well, gintlemen, it puts me into a tremble, even at this time, to think of how little we cared about doing what we were bent upon. Them that had to manage the business war more than half drunk; and, hard fortune to me! but you would think it was to a wedding they went—some of them singing songs against the law—some of them quite merry, and laughing as if they had found a mare's nest. The big fellow, Collier, had a dark lanthern wid a half-burned turf in it to light the bonfire, as they said; others had guns and pistols—some of them charged, and some of them not; some had bagnets, and ould rusty swords, pitchforks, and so on. Myself had nothing in my hand but the flail I was thrashing wid that day; and to tell the thruth, the divil a step I would have gone with them, only for fraid of my health: for, as I said awhile agone, if any discovery was made afterwards, them that promised to go, and turned tail, would be marked as the informers. Neither was I so blind but I could see that there war plenty there that would stay away if they durst.

"Well, we went on till we came to a little dark corner below the house, where we met and held a council of war upon what we should do. Collier and the other strangers from behind the mountains war to go first, and the rest war to stand round the house at a distance—he carried the lanthern, a bagnet, and a horse pistol; and half a dozen more war to bring over bottles of straw from Vengeance's own haggard, to hould up to the thatch. It's all

past and gone now—but three of the Reillys were desperate against Vesey that night, particularly one of them that he had shot about a year and a half before—that is, peppered two of the right-hand fingers off of him, one night in a scuffle, as Vesey came home from an Orange-lodge. Well, all went on purty fair; we had got as far as the outhouses, where we stopped, to see if we could hear any noise; but all was quiet as you plase.

"'Now, Vengeance,' says Reilly, swearing a terrible oath out of him—'you murdering Orange villain, you're going to get your pay,' says he.

"'Ay,' says Grogan, 'what he often threatened to others he'll soon meet himself, plase God!—come, boys,' says he, 'bring the straw and light it, and just lay it up, my darlings, nicely to the thatch here, and ye'll see what a glorious bonfire we'll have of the black Orange villain's blankets in less than no time.'

"Some of us could hardly stand this: 'Stop, boys,' cried one of Dan Slevin's sons, 'stop! Vengeance is bad enough, but his wife and children never offinded us—we'll not burn the place.'

"'No,' said others, speaking out when they heard anybody at all having courage to do so—'it's too bad, boys, to burn the place; for if we do,' says they, 'some of the innocent may be burned before they get from the house, or even before they waken out of their sleep.'

"'Let him be dealt with first,' says Slevin, 'and

bring Vengeance out; let us cut the ears off of his head and lave him.'

"'Damn him!' says another, 'let us not take the vagabone's life; it's enough to take the ears from him, and to give him a *prod* or two of a bagnet on the ribs; but don't kill him.'

"'Well, well,' says Reilly, 'let us knock at the door, and get himself and the family out,' says he, 'and then we'll see what can be done wid him.'

"'Tattheration to me,' says the big Longford fellow, 'if he had sarved me, Reilly, as he did you, but I'd roast him in the flames of his own house,' says he.

"'I'd have *you* to know,' says Slevin, 'that you have no command here, Collier. I'm captain at the present time,' says he; 'and more nor what I wish shall not be done. Go over,' says he to the black faces, 'and rap him up.'

"Accordingly they began to knock at the door, commanding Vengeance to get up and come out to them.

"'Come, Vengeance,' says Collier, 'put on you, my good fellow, and come out till two or three of your neighbours that wish you well gets a sight of your purty face, you babe of grace!'

"'Who are you that wants me at all?' says Vengeance from within.

"'Come out, first,' says Collier; 'a few friends that has a crow to pluck with you: walk out, avourneen; or if you'd rather be

roasted alive, why you may stay where you are,' says he.

"'Gentlemen,' says Vengeance, 'I have never to my knowledge offinded any of you; and I hope you won't be so cruel as to take an industrious, hard-working man from his family, in the clouds of the night, to do him an injury. Go home, gentlemen, in the name of God, and let me and mine alone. You're all mighty dacent gentlemen, you know, and I'm determined never to make or meddle with any of you. Sure, I know right well it's purtecting me you would be, dacent gentlemen. But I don't think there's any of my neighbours there, or they wouldn't stand by and see me injured.'

"'Thrue for you, avick,' says they, giving, at the same time, a terrible patterrara agin the door, with two or three big stones.

"'Stop, stop!' says Vengeance, 'don't break the door, and I'll open it. I know you're merciful, dacent gentlemen — I know you're merciful.'

"So the thief came and unbarred it quietly, and the next minute about a dozen of them that war within the house let slap at us. As God would have had it, the crowd didn't happen to be forenent the door, or numbers of them would have been shot, and the night was dark, too, which was in our favour. The first volley was scarcely over when there was another slap from the out-houses; and after that another from the gardens; and after that, to be sure, we took to our scrapers. Several of them were very badly wounded; but as for Collier,

he was shot dead, and Grogan was taken prisoner, with five more, on the spot. There never was such a chase as we got; and only that they thought there was more of us in it, they might have tuck most of us prisoners.

"'Fly, boys!' says Grogan, as soon as they fired out of the house—'we've been sould,' says he, 'but I'll die game, anyhow,'—and so he did, poor fellow; for although he and the other four war transported, one of them never sould the pass or stagged. Not but that they might have done it, for all that, only that there was a whisper sent to them, that if they *did*, a single soul belonging to one of them wouldn't be left living. The Grogans were cousins of Denis Kelly's, that's now laid out there above.

"From the time this tuck place till after the 'sizes there wasn't a stir among them on any side; but when that war over, the boys began to prepare. Denis, heavens be his bed! was there in his glory. This was in the spring 'sizes, and the May fair soon followed. Ah! that was the bloody sight, I'm tould—for I wasn't at it—atween the Orangemen and them. The Ribbonmen war bate though, but not till after there was a desperate fight on both sides. I was tould that Denis Kelly that day knocked down five-and-twenty men in about three-quarters of an hour; and only that long John Grimes hot him a *polthoge* on the sconce with the butt-end of the gun, it was thought the Orangemen would be beat. That blow broke his skull, and was the manes of his death. He was carried home senseless."

"Well, Lachlin," said my brother, "if you didn't see it, I did. I happened to be looking out of John Carson's upper window—for it wasn't altogether safe to contemplate it within reach of the missiles. It was certainly a dreadful and a barbarous sight. You have often observed the calm, gloomy silence that precedes a thunderstorm; and had you been there that day, you might have witnessed its illustration in a scene much more awful. The thick living mass of people extended from the corner-house, nearly a quarter of a mile, at this end of the town, up to the parsonage on the other side. During the early part of the day, every kind of business was carried on in a hurry and an impatience which denoted the little chance they knew there would be for transacting it in the evening.

"Up to the hour of four o'clock the fair was unusually quiet, and, on the whole, presented nothing in any way remarkable; but after that hour you might observe the busy stir and hum of the mass settling down into a deep, brooding, portentous silence that was absolutely fearful. The females, with dismay and terror pictured in their faces, hurried home; and in various instances you might see mothers, and wives, and sisters clinging about the sons, husbands, and brothers, attempting to drag them by main force from the danger which they knew impended over them. In this they seldom succeeded; for the person so urged was usually compelled to tear himself from them by superior strength.

"The pedlars and basket-women, and such as had tables and standings erected in the streets, commenced removing them with all possible haste. The shopkeepers, and other inhabitants of the town, put up their shutters, in order to secure their windows from being shattered. Strangers, who were compelled to stop in town that night, took shelter in the inns and other houses of entertainment where they lodged: so that about five o'clock the street was completely clear, and free for action.

"Hitherto there was not a stroke—the scene became even more silent and gloomy, although the moral darkness of their ill-suppressed passions was strongly contrasted with the splendour of the sun, that poured down a tide of golden light upon the multitude. This contrast between the natural brightness of the evening, and the internal gloom of their hearts, as the beams of the sun rested upon the ever-moving crowd, would, to any man who knew the impetuosity with which the spirit of religious hatred was soon to rage among them, produce novel and singular sensations. For, after all, Toby, there is a mysterious connection between natural and moral things, which often invests both nature and sentiment with a feeling that certainly would not come home to our hearts if such a connection did not exist. A rose-tree beside a grave will lead us from sentiment to reflection; and any other association, where a painful or melancholy thought is clothed with a garb of joy or pleasure, will strike us more deeply in proportion as the contrast is strong.

On seeing the sun or moon struggling through the darkness of surrounding clouds, I confess, although you may smile, that I feel for the moment a diminution of enjoyment — something taken, as it were, from the sum of my happiness.

"Ere the quarrel commenced, you might see a dark and hateful glare scowling from the countenances of the two parties, as they viewed and approached each other in the street—the eye was set in deadly animosity, and the face marked with an ireful paleness, occasioned at once by revenge and apprehension. Groups were silently hurrying with an eager and energetic step to their places of rendezvous, grasping their weapons more closely, or grinding their teeth in the impatience of their fury. The veterans on each side were surrounded by their respective followers, anxious to act under their direction; and the very boys seemed to be animated with a martial spirit, much more eager than that of those who had greater experience in party quarrels.

"Jem Finigan's public-house was the head-quarters and rallying-point of the Ribbonmen; the Orangemen assembled in that of Joe Sherlock, the master of an Orange lodge. About six o'clock, the crowd in the street began gradually to fall off to the opposite ends of the town—the Roman Catholics towards the north and the Protestants towards the south. Carson's window, from which I was observing their motions, was exactly half-way between them, so that I had a distinct view of both.

At this moment I noticed Denis Kelly coming forward from the closely condensed mass formed by the Ribbonmen: he advanced with his cravat off, to the middle of the vacant space between the parties, holding a fine oak cudgel in his hand. He then stopped, and addressing the Orangemen, said:

"'Where's Vengeance and his crew now? Is there any single Orange villain among you that dare come down and meet me here, like a man? Is John Grimes there? for if he is, before we begin to take you *out of a face*, to hunt you altogether out of the town, ye Orange villains, I would be glad that he'd step down to Denis Kelly here for two or three minutes; I'll not keep him longer.'

"There was now a stir and a murmur among the Orangemen, as if a rush was about to take place towards Denis; but Grimes, whom I saw endeavouring to curb them in, left the crowd, and advanced towards him.

"At this moment an instinctive movement among both masses took place; so that when Grimes had come within a few yards of Kelly, both parties were within two or three perches of them. Kelly was standing, apparently off his guard, with one hand thrust carelessly into the breast of his waistcoat, and the cudgel in the other; but his eye was fixed calmly upon Grimes as he approached. They were both powerful, fine men — brawny, vigorous, and active: Grimes had somewhat the advantage of the other in height; he also fought with his left hand, from which circumstance he was

nicknamed *Kitthouge*. He was a man of a dark, stern-looking countenance; and the tones of his voice were deep, sullen, and of appalling strength.

"As they approached each other, the windows on each side of the street were crowded; but there was not a breath to be heard in any direction, nor from either party. As for myself, my heart palpitated with anxiety. What *they* might have felt I do not know: but they must have experienced considerable apprehension; for as they were both the champions of their respective parties, and had never before met in single encounter, their characters depended on the issue of the contest.

"'Well, Grimes,' said Denis, 'sure I've often wished for this same meetin', man, betune myself and you; I have what you're goin' to get, *in* for you this long time; but you'll get it now, avick, plase God—'

"'It was not to scould I came, you popish, ribly rascal,' replied Grimes, 'but to give you what you're long—'

"Ere the word had been out of his mouth, however, Kelly sprung over to him; and making a feint, as if he intended to lay the stick on his ribs, he swung it past without touching him, and, bringing it round his own head like lightning, made it tell with a powerful back-stroke, right on Grimes's temple, and in an instant his own face was sprinkled with the blood which sprung from the wound. Grimes staggered forward towards his antagonist, seeing which, Kelly sprung back, and was again meeting

him with full force, when Grimes, turning a little, clutched Kelly's stick in his right hand, and being left-handed himself, ere the other could wrench the cudgel from him, he gave him a terrible blow upon the back part of the head, which laid Kelly in the dust.

"There was then a deafening shout from the Orange party; and Grimes stood until Kelly should be in the act of rising, ready then to give him another blow. The coolness and generalship of Kelly, however, were here very remarkable; for, when he was just getting to his feet, 'Look at your party coming down upon me!' he exclaimed to Grimes, who turned round to order them back, and, in the interim, Kelly was upon his legs.

"I was surprised at the coolness of both men; for Grimes was by no means inflated with the boisterous triumph of his party—nor did Denis get into a blind rage on being knocked down. They approached again, their eyes kindled into savage fury, tamed down into the wariness of experienced combatants; for a short time they stood eying each other, as if calculating upon the contingent advantages of attack or defence. This was a moment of great interest; for, as their huge and powerful frames stood out in opposition, strung and dilated by the impulse of passion and the energy of contest, no judgment, however experienced, could venture to anticipate the result of the battle, or name the person likely to be victorious. Indeed it was surprising how the natural sagacity of these men threw their attitudes and

movements into scientific form and symmetry. Kelly raised his cudgel, and placed it transversely in the air, between himself and his opponent; Grimes instantly placed his against it—both weapons thus forming a St. Andrew's cross—whilst the men themselves stood foot to foot, calm and collected. Nothing could be finer than their proportions, nor superior to their respective attitudes; their broad chests were in a line; their thick, well-set necks, laid a little back, as were their bodies, without, however, losing their balance; and their fierce but calm features, grimly but placidly scowling at each other, like men who were prepared for the onset.

"At length Kelly made an attempt to repeat his former feint, with variations; for, whereas he had sent the first blow to Grimes's right temple, he took measures now to reach the left; his action was rapid, but equally quick was the eye of his antagonist, whose cudgel was up in ready guard to meet the blow. It met it; and with such surprising power was it sent and opposed that both cudgels, on meeting, bent almost each other into curves. An involuntary hurra followed this from their respective parties—not so much on account of the skill displayed by the combatants as in admiration of their cudgels, and of the judgment with which they must have been selected. In fact, it was the staves, rather than the men, that were praised; and certainly the former did their duty. In a moment their shillelaghs were [illegible] each other back [illegible], and the men resumed their

former attitudes; their savage determination, their kindled eyes, the blood which disfigured the face of Grimes, and begrimed also the countenance of his antagonist into a deeper expression of ferocity, occasioned many a cowardly heart to shrink from the sight. There they stood, gory and stern, ready for the next onset; it was first made by Grimes, who tried to practise on Kelly the feint which Kelly had before practised on him. Denis, after his usual manner, caught the blow in his open hand, and clutched the staff, with an intention of holding it until he might visit Grimes, now apparently unguarded, with a levelling blow; but Grimes's effort to wrest the cudgel from his grasp drew all Kelly's strength to that quarter, and prevented him from availing himself of the other's defenceless attitude. A trial of muscular power ensued, and their enormous bodily strength was exhibited in the stiff tug for victory. Kelly's address prevailed; for while Grimes pulled against him with all his collected vigour, the former suddenly let go his hold, and the latter, having lost his balance, staggered back: lightning could not be more quick than the action of Kelly, as, with tremendous force, his cudgel rung on the unprotected head of Grimes, who fell, or rather was shot to the ground, as if some superior power had dashed him against it; and there he lay for a short time, quivering under the blow he had received.

"A peal of triumph now arose from Kelly's party; but Kelly himself, placing his arms

akimbo, stood calmly over his enemy, awaiting his return to the conflict. For nearly five minutes he stood in this attitude, during which time Grimes did not stir; at length Kelly stooped a little, and peering closely into his face, exclaimed:

"'Why, then, is it acting you are?—anyhow, I wouldn't put it past you, you cunning vagabone; 'tis lying to take breath he is—get up, man, I'd scorn to touch you till you're on your legs; not all as one, for sure it's yourself would show me no such forbearance. Up with you, man alive, I've none of your thrachery in me. I'll not *rise* my cudgel till you're on your guard.'

"There was an expression of disdain, mingled with a glow of honest, manly generosity, on his countenance, as he spoke, which made him at once the favourite with such spectators as were not connected with either of the parties. Grimes arose, and it was evident that Kelly's generosity deepened his resentment more than the blow which had sent him so rapidly to the ground; however, he was still cool, but his brows knit, his eye flashed with double fierceness, and his complexion settled into a dark blue shade, which gave to his whole visage an expression fearfully ferocious. Kelly hailed this as the first appearance of passion; his brow expanded as the other approached, and a dash of confidence, if not of triumph, softened in some degree the sternness of his features.

"With caution they encountered again, each collected for a spring, their eyes gleaming at

each other like those of tigers. Grimes made a motion as if he would have struck Kelly with his fist; and, as the latter threw up his guard against the blow, he received a stroke from Grimes's cudgel in the under part of the right arm. This had been directed at his elbow, with an intention of rendering the arm powerless: it fell short, however, yet was sufficient tc relax the grasp which Kelly had of his weapon. Had Kelly been a novice, this stratagem alone would have soon vanquished him; his address, however, was fully equal to that of his antagonist. The staff dropped instantly from his grasp, but a stout thong of black polished leather, with a shining tassel at the end of it, had bound it securely to his massive wrist; the cudgel, therefore, only dangled from his arm, and did not, as the other expected, fall to the ground, or put Denis to the necessity of stooping for it—Grimes's object being to have struck him in that attitude.

"A flash of indignation now shot from Kelly's eye, and with the speed of lightning he sprung within Grimes's weapon, determined to wrest it from him. The grapple that ensued was gigantic. In a moment Grimes's staff was parallel with the horizon between them, clutched in the powerful grasp of both. They stood exactly opposite, and rather close to each other; their arms sometimes stretched out stiff and at full length, again contracted, until their faces, glowing and distorted by the energy of the contest, were drawn almost together. Sometimes the prevailing strength of one would

raise the staff slowly, and with gradually developed power, up in a perpendicular position: again the reaction of opposing strength would strain it back, and sway the weighty frame of the antagonist, crouched and set into desperate resistance, along with it; whilst the hard pebbles under their feet were crumbled into powder, and the very street itself furrowed into gravel by the shock of their opposing strength. Indeed, so well matched a pair never met in contest; their strength, their wind, their activity, and their natural science appeared to be perfectly equal.

"At length, by a tremendous effort, Kelly got the staff twisted nearly out of Grimes's hand, and a short shout, half-encouraging, half-indignant, came from Grimes's party. This added shame to his other passions, and threw an impulse of almost superhuman strength into him: he recovered his advantage, but nothing more; they twisted—they heaved their great frames against each other—they struggled—their action became rapid—they swayed each other this way and that—their eyes like fire—their teeth locked, and their nostrils dilated. Sometimes they twined about each other like serpents, and twirled round with such rapidity that it was impossible to distinguish them—sometimes, when a pull of more than ordinary power took place, they seemed to cling together almost without motion, bending down until their heads nearly touched the ground, their cracking joints seeming to stretch by the effort, and the muscles of their limbs stand-

ing out from the flesh, strung into amazing tension.

"In this attitude were they, when Denis, with the eye of a hawk, spied a disadvantage in Grimes's position; he wheeled round, placed his broad shoulder against the shaggy breast of the other, and giving him what is called an 'inside crook', strained him, despite of every effort, until he got him off his shoulder, and off the point of resistance. There was a cry of alarm from the windows, particularly from the females, as Grimes's huge body was swung over Kelly's shoulder, until it came down in a crash upon the hard gravel of the street, while Denis stood in triumph, with his enemy's staff in his hand. A loud huzza followed this from all present except the Orangemen, who stood bristling with fury and shame for the temporary defeat of their champion.

"Denis again had his enemy at his mercy; but he scorned to use his advantage ungenerously; he went over, and placing the staff in his hands—for the other had got to his legs,—retrograded to his place, and desired Grimes to defend himself.

"After considerable manœuvring on both sides, Denis, who appeared to be the more active of the two, got an open on his antagonist, and by a powerful blow upon Grimes's ear, sent him to the ground with amazing force. I never saw such a blow given by mortal; the end of the cudgel came exactly upon the ear, and as Grimes went down, the blood spirted out of his mouth and nostrils; he then kicked

convulsively several times as he lay upon the ground, and that moment I really thought he would never have breathed more.

"The shout was again raised by the Ribbonmen, who threw up their hats, and bounded from the ground with the most vehement exultation. Both parties then waited to give Grimes time to rise and renew the battle; but he appeared perfectly contented to remain where he was: for there appeared no signs of life or motion in him.

"'Have you got your *gruel*, boy?' said Kelly, going over to where he lay;—'Well, you met Denis Kelly, at last, didn't you? and there you lie; but plase God, the most of your sort will soon lie in the same state. Come, boys,' said Kelly, addressing his own party, 'now for bloody Vengeance and his crew, that thransported the Grogans and the Caffries, and murdered Collier. Now, boys, have at the murderers, and let us have satisfaction for all!'

"A mutual rush instantly took place; but, ere the Orangemen came down to where Grimes lay, Kelly had taken his staff, and handed it to one of his own party. It is impossible to describe the scene that ensued. The noise of the blows, the shouting, the yelling, the groans, the scalped heads, and gory visages, gave to the eye an impression that could not easily be forgotten. The battle was obstinately maintained on both sides for nearly an hour, and with a skill of manœuvering, attack, and retreat, that was astonishing.

"Both parties arranged themselves against each other, forming something like two lines of battle, and these extended along the town, nearly from one end to the other. It was curious to remark the difference in the persons and appearances of the combatants. In the Orange line, the men were taller and of more powerful frames; but the Ribbonmen were more hardy, active, and courageous. Man to man, notwithstanding their superior bodily strength, the Orangemen could never fight the others; the former depend too much upon their fire- and side-arms, but they are by no means so well trained to the use of the cudgel as their enemies. In the district where the scene of this fight is laid, the Catholics generally inhabit the mountainous part of the country, to which, when the civil feuds of worse times prevailed, they had been driven at the point of the bayonet. The Protestants and Presbyterians, on the other hand, who came in upon their possessions, occupy the richer and more fertile tracts of the land; being more wealthy, they live with less labour, and on better food. The characteristic features produced by these causes are such as might be expected—the Catholic being, like his soil, hardy, thin, and capable of bearing all weathers; and the Protestants, larger, softer, and more inactive.

"Their advance to the first onset was far different from a faction fight. There existed a silence here that powerfully evinced the inextinguishable animosity with which they encountered. For some time they fought in two

compact bodies, that remained unbroken so long as the chances of victory were doubtful. Men went down, and were up, and went down in all directions, with uncommon rapidity; and as the weighty phalanx of Orangemen stood out against the nimble line of their mountain adversaries, the intrepid spirit of the latter, and their surprising skill and activity, soon gave symptoms of a gradual superiority in the conflict. In the course of about half an hour, the Orange party began to give way in the northern end of the town; and, as their opponents pressed them warmly and with unsparing hand, the heavy mass formed by their numbers began to break, and this decomposition ran up their line until in a short time they were thrown into utter confusion. They now fought in detached parties; but these subordinate conflicts, though shorter in duration than the shock of the general battle, were much more inhuman and destructive; for whenever any particular gang succeeded in putting their adversaries to flight, they usually ran to the assistance of their friends in the nearest fight—by which means they often fought three to one. In these instances the persons inferior in number suffered such barbarities, as it would be painful to detail.

"There lived a short distance out of the town a man nicknamed Jemsy Boccagh, on account of his lameness—he was also sometimes called 'Hop-an'-go-constant,'—who fell the first victim to party spirit. He had got arms on seeing his friends likely to be defeated, and had

the hardihood to follow, with charged bayonet, a few Ribbonmen, whom he attempted to intercept, as they fled from a large number of their enemies, who had got them separated from their comrades. Boccagh ran across a field, in order to get before them in the road, and was in the act of climbing a ditch, when one of them, who carried a spade-shaft, struck him a blow on the head, which put an end to his existence.

"This circumstance imparted, of course, fiercer hatred to both parties—triumph inspiring the one, a thirst for vengeance nerving the other. Kelly inflicted tremendous punishment in every direction; for scarcely a blow fell from him which did not bring a man to the ground. It absolutely resembled a military engagement, for the number of combatants amounted at least to four thousand men. In many places the street was covered with small pools and clots of blood, which flowed from those who lay insensible—while others were borne away bleeding, groaning, or staggering, having been battered into a total unconsciousness of the scene about them.

"At length the Orangemen gave way, and their enemies, yelling with madness and revenge, began to beat them with unrestrained fury. The former, finding that they could not resist the impetuous tide which burst upon them, fled back past the church, and stopped not until they had reached an elevation, on which lay two or three heaps of stones, that had been collected for the purpose of paving

the streets. Here they made a stand, and commenced a vigorous discharge of them against their pursuers. This checked the latter; and the others, seeing them hesitate and likely to retreat from the missiles, pelted them with such effect that the tables became turned, and the Ribbonmen made a speedy flight back into the town.

"In the meantime several Orangemen had gone into Sherlock's, where a considerable number of arms had been deposited, with an intention of resorting to them in case of a defeat at the cudgels. These now came out, and met the Ribbonmen on their flight from those who were pelting them with the stones. A dreadful scene ensued. The Ribbonmen, who had the advantage in numbers, finding themselves intercepted before by those who had arms, and pursued behind by those who had recourse to the stones, fought with uncommon bravery and desperation. Kelly, who was furious, but still collected and decisive, shouted out in Irish, lest the opposite party might understand him: 'Let every *two* men seize upon *one* of those who have the arms.'

"This was attempted, and effected with partial success; and I have no doubt but the Orangemen would have been ultimately beaten and deprived of their weapons, were it not that many of them, who had got their pistols out of Sherlock's, discharged them among their enemies, and wounded several. The Catholics could not stand this; but, wishing to retaliate as effectually as possible, lifted stones wherever

they could find them, and kept up the fight at a distance, as they retreated. On both sides, wherever a solitary foe was caught straggling from the rest, he was instantly punished with a most cruel and bloodthirsty spirit.

"It was just about this time that I saw Kelly engaged with two men, whom he kept at bay with great ease—retrograding, however, as he fought, towards his own party. Grimes, who had for some time before this recovered and joined the fight once more, was returning, after having pursued several of the Ribbonmen past the market-house, where he spied Kelly thus engaged. With a Volunteer gun in his hand, and furious with the degradation of his former defeat, he ran over and struck him with the butt-end of it upon the temple—and Denis fell. When the stroke was given, an involuntary cry of 'Murder,—foul, foul!' burst from those who looked on from the windows; and long John Steele, Grimes's father-in-law, in indignation, raised his cudgel to knock him down for this treacherous and malignant blow; —but a person out of Neal Cassidy's back-yard hurled a round stone, about six pounds in weight, at Grimes's head, that felled him to the earth, leaving him as insensible, and nearly in as dangerous a state as Kelly,—for his jaw was broken.

"By this time the Catholics had retreated out of the town, and Denis might probably have received more punishment, had those who were returning from the pursuit recognized him; but James Wilson, seeing the dangerous

situation in which he lay, came out, and with the assistance of his servant-man, brought him into his own house. When the Orangemen had driven their adversaries off the field, they commenced the most hideous yellings through the streets—got music, and played party tunes—offered any money for the face of a Papist; and any of that religion who were so unfortunate as to make their appearance, were beaten in the most relentless manner. It was precisely the same thing on the part of the Ribbonmen; if a Protestant, but above all an Orangeman, came in their way, he was sure to be treated with barbarity; for the retaliation on either side was dreadfully unjust—the innocent suffering as well as the guilty. Leaving the window, I found Kelly in a bad state below stairs.

"'What's to be done?' said I to Wilson.

"'I know not,' replied he, 'except I put him between us on my jaunting-car, and drive him home.'

"This appeared decidedly the best plan we could adopt; so, after putting to the horse, we placed him on the car, sitting one on each side of him, and, in this manner, left him at his own house."

"Did you run no risk," said I, "in going among Kelly's friends, whilst they were under the influence of party feeling and exasperated passion?"

"No," said he; "we had rendered many of them acts of kindness, and had never exhibited any spirit but a *friendly* one towards them; and

such individuals, but only such, *might walk through a crowd of enraged Catholics or Protestants quite unmolested.*

"The next morning Kelly's landlord, Sir W. R——, and two magistrates, were at his house, but he lay like a log, without sense or motion. Whilst they were there, the surgeon arrived, and, after examining his head, declared that the skull was fractured. During that and the following day the house was surrounded by crowds, anxious to know his state; and nothing might be heard amongst most of them but loud and undisguised expressions of the most ample revenge. The wife was frantic; and, on seeing me, hid her face in her hands, exclaiming:

"'Ah, sir, I knew it would come to this; and you, too, tould him the same thing. *My* curse and *God's* curse on it for quarrelling! Will it never stop in the counthry till they rise some time and murdher one another out of the face?'

"As soon as the swelling in his head was reduced, the surgeon performed the operation of trepanning, and thereby saved his life; but his strength and intellect were gone, and he just lingered for four months, a feeble, drivelling simpleton, until, in consequence of a cold, which produced inflammation in the brain, he died, as hundreds have died before, the victim of party spirit."

Such was the account which I heard of my old school-fellow, Denis Kelly; and, indeed, when I reflected upon the nature of the educa-

tion he received, I could not but admit that the consequences were such as might naturally be expected to result from it.

The next morning a relation of Mrs. Kelly's came down to my brother, hoping that, as they wished to have as decent a funeral as possible, he would be so kind as to attend it.

"Musha, God knows, sir," said the man, "it's poor Denis, heavens be his bed! that had the regard and reverence for everyone, young and ould, of your father's family; and it's himself that would be the proud man, if he was living, to see you, sir, riding after his coffin."

"Well," said my brother, "let Mrs. Kelly know that I shall certainly attend, and so will my brother, here, who has come to pay me a visit. Why, I believe, Tom, you forget him!"

"Your brother, sir! Is it Master Toby, that used to cudgel the half of the counthry when he was at school? Gad's my life, *Masther* Toby (I was now about thirty-six), but it's your four quarters, sure enough! Arrah, thin, sir, who'd think it—you're grown so full and stout?—but, faix, you'd always the bone in you! Ah, Masther Toby!" said he, "he's lying cowld, this morning, that would be the happy man to lay his eyes wanst more upon you. Many an' many's the winther's evening did he spind, talking about the time when you and he were *boushals* together, and of the pranks you played at school, but especially of the time you both leathered the four Grogans, and

tuck the apples from them—my poor fellow!—and now to be stretched a corpse, lavin' his poor widdy and childher behind him!"

I accordingly expressed my sorrow for Denis's death, which, indeed, I sincerely regretted, for he possessed materials for an excellent character, had not all that was amiable and good in him been permitted to run wild.

As soon as my trunk and travelling-bag had been brought from the inn, where I had left them the preceding night, we got our horses, and, as we wished to show particular respect to Denis's remains, rode up, with some of our friends, to the house. When we approached, there were large crowds of the country-people before the door of his well-thatched and respectable-looking dwelling, which had three chimneys, and a set of sash-windows, clean and well glazed. On our arrival, I was soon recognized and surrounded by numbers of those to whom I had formerly been known, who received and welcomed me with a warmth of kindness and sincerity which it would be in vain to look for among the peasantry of any other nation.

Indeed, I have uniformly observed, that when no religious or political feeling influences the heart and principles of an Irish peasant, he is singularly sincere and faithful in his attachments, and has always a bias to the generous and the disinterested. To my own knowledge, circumstances frequently occur, in which the ebullition of party spirit is altogether temporary, subsiding after the cause that produced it has

passed away, and leaving the kind peasant to the natural, affectionate, and generous impulses of his character. But poor *Paddy*, unfortunately, is as combustible a material in politics or religion as in fighting—thinking it his duty to take the weak side, without any other consideration than because it *is* the weak side.

When we entered the house I was almost suffocated with the strong fumes of tobacco-smoke, snuff, and whisky; and as I had been an old school-fellow of Denis's, my appearance was the signal for a general burst of grief among his relations, in which the more distant friends and neighbours of the deceased joined, to keep up the *keening*.

I have often, indeed always, felt that there is something extremely touching in the Irish cry; in fact, that it breathes the very spirit of wild and natural sorrow. The Irish peasantry, whenever a death takes place, are exceedingly happy in seizing upon any contingent circumstances that may occur, and making them subservient to the excitement of grief for the departed, or the exaltation and praise of his character and virtues. My entrance was a proof of this—I had scarcely advanced to the middle of the floor, when my intimacy with the deceased, our boyish sports, and even our quarrels, were adverted to with a natural eloquence and pathos that, in spite of my firmness, occasioned me to feel the prevailing sorrow. They spoke, or chaunted mournfully, in Irish; but the substance of what they said was as follows:—

"Oh, Denis, Denis, avourneen! you're lying low, this morning of sorrow!—lying low are you, and does not know who it is (alluding to me) that is standing over you, weeping for the days you spent together in your youth! It's yourself, *acushla agus athore machree* (the pulse and beloved of my heart), that would stretch out the right hand warmly to welcome him to the place of his birth, where you had both been so often happy about the green hills and valleys with each other! He's here now, standing over you; and it's he, of all his family, kind and respectable as they are, that was your own favourite, Denis, *avourneen dhelish!* He alone was the companion that you loved!—with no other could you be happy! —For him did you fight, when he wanted a friend in your young quarrels! and if you had a dispute with him, were you not sorry for it? Are you not now stretched in death before him, and will he not forgive you?"

All this was uttered, of course, extemporaneously, and without the least preparation. They then passed on to an enumeration of his virtues as a father, a husband, son, and brother—specified his worth as he stood related to society in general, and his kindness as a neighbour and a friend.

An occurrence now took place which may serve, in some measure, to throw light upon many of the atrocities and outrages which take place in Ireland. Before I mention it, however, I think it necessary to make a few observations relative to it. I am convinced that those who

are intimately acquainted with the Irish peasantry will grant that there is not on the earth a class of people in whom the domestic affections of blood-relationship are so pure, strong, and sacred. The birth of a child will occasion a poor man to break in upon the money set apart for his landlord, in order to keep the christening, surrounded by his friends and neighbours, with due festivity. A marriage exhibits a spirit of joy, an exuberance of happiness and delight, to be found only in the Green Island; and the death of a member of a family is attended with a sincerity of grief scarcely to be expected from men so much the creatures of the more mirthful feelings. In fact, their sorrow is a solecism in humanity—at once deep and loud—mingled up, even in its deepest paroxysms, with a laughter-loving spirit. It is impossible that an Irishman, sunk in the lowest depths of affliction, could permit his grief to flow in all its sad solemnity, even for a day, without some glimpse of his natural humour throwing a faint and rapid light over the gloom within him. No: there is an amalgamation of sentiments in his mind which, as I said before, would puzzle any philosopher to account for. Yet it would be wrong to say, though his grief has something of an unsettled and ludicrous character about it, that he is incapable of the most subtle and delicate shades of sentiment, or the deepest and most desolating intensity of sorrow. But he laughs off those heavy vapours which hang about the moral constitution of the people of other nations,

giving them a morbid habit, which leaves them neither strength nor firmness to resist calamity which they feel less keenly than an Irishman, exactly as a healthy man will feel the pangs of death with more acuteness than one who is wasted away by debility and decay. Let any man witness an emigration, and he will satisfy himself that this is true. I am convinced that Goldsmith's inimitable description of one, in his *Deserted Village*, was a picture drawn from actual observation. Let him observe the emigrant, as he crosses the Atlantic, and he will find, although he joins the jest, and the laugh, and the song, that he will seek a silent corner or a silent hour, to indulge the sorrow which he still feels for the friends, the companions, and the native fields that he has left behind him. This constitution of mind is beneficial: the Irishman seldom or never hangs himself, because he is capable of too much real feeling to permit himself to become the slave of that which is factitious. There is no void in his affections or sentiments, which a morbid and depraved sensibility could occupy; but his feelings, of what character soever they may be, are strong because they are fresh and healthy. For this reason, I maintain that when the domestic affections come under the influence of either grief or joy, the peasantry of no nation are capable of feeling so deeply. Even on the ordinary occasions of death, sorrow, though it alternates with mirth and cheerfulness, in a manner peculiar to themselves, lingers long in the unseen recesses of domestic life [illegible]

therefore, whether by law or violence, that plants a wound HERE, *will suffer to the death.*

When my brother and I entered the house, the body had just been put into the coffin; and it is usual after this takes place, and before it is nailed down, for the immediate relatives of the family to embrace the deceased, and take their last look and farewell of his remains. In the present instance, the children were brought over, one by one, to perform that trying and melancholy ceremony. The first was an infant on the breast, whose little innocent mouth was held down to that of its dead father; the babe smiled upon his still and solemn features, and would have played with his grave-clothes, but that the murmur of unfeigned sorrow, which burst from all present, occasioned it to be removed. The next was a fine little girl, of three or four years, who enquired where they were going to bring her daddy, and asked if he would not soon come back to *her*.

"My daddy's sleeping a long time," said the child, "but I'll waken him till he sings me 'Peggy Slevin'. I like my daddy best, bekase I sleep wid him—and he brings me good things from the fair; he bought me this ribbon," said she, pointing to a ribbon which he had purchased for her.

The rest of the children were sensible of their loss, and truly it was a distressing scene. His eldest son and daughter, the former about fourteen, the latter about two years older, lay on the coffin, kissing his lips, and were with difficulty torn away from it.

"Oh!" said the boy, "he is going from us, and night or day we will never see him or hear him more! Oh! father—father—is that the last sight we are ever to see of your face? Why, father dear, did you die, and leave us for ever?—for ever—wasn't your heart good to us, and your words kind to us—Oh! your last smile is smiled—your last kiss given—and your last kind word spoken to your childher that you loved, and that loved you as we did. Father, core of my heart, are you gone for ever, and your voice departed? Oh! the murdherers, oh! the murdherers, the murdherers!" he exclaimed, "that killed my father; for only for them, he would be still wid us: but, by the God that's over me, if I live, night or day I will not rest, till I have blood for blood; nor do I care who hears it, nor if I was hanged the next minute."

As these words escaped him, a deep and awful murmur of suppressed vengeance burst from his relations. At length their sorrow became toc strong to be repressed; and as it was the time to take their last embrace and look of him, they came up, and after fixing their eyes on his face in deep affliction, their lips began tc quiver, and their countenances became convulsed. They then burst out simultaneously intc a tide of violent grief, which, after having indulged in it for some time, they checked. But the resolution of revenge was stronger than their grief, for, standing over his dead body, they repeated, almost word for word, the vow of vengeance which the son had just

sworn. It was really a scene dreadfully and terribly solemn; and I could not avoid reflecting upon the mystery of nature, which can, from the deep power of domestic affection, cause to spring a determination to crime of so black a dye. Would to God that our peasantry had a clearer sense of moral and religious duties, and were not left so much as they are to the headlong impulse of an ardent temperament, and an impetuous character; and would to God that the clergy who superintend their morals had a better knowledge of human nature, and a more liberal education!

During all this time the heart-broken widow sat beyond the coffin, looking upon what passed with a stupid sense of bereavement; and when they had all performed this last ceremony, it was found necessary to tell her that the time was come for the procession of the funeral, and that they only waited for her to take, as the rest did, her last look and embrace of her husband. When she heard this, it pierced her like an arrow: she became instantly collected, and her complexion assumed a dark shade of despairing anguish, which it was an affliction even to look upon. She then stooped over the coffin, and kissed him several times, after which she ceased sobbing, and lay silently with her mouth to his.

The character of a faithful wife sorrowing for a beloved husband has that in it which compels both respect and sympathy. There was not at this moment a dry eye in the house. She still lay silent on the coffin; but, as I ob-

served that her bosom seemed not to heave as it did a little before, I was convinced that she had become insensible. I accordingly beckoned to Kelly's brother, to whom I mentioned what I had suspected; and, on his going over to ascertain the truth, he found her as I had said. She was then brought to the air, and after some trouble recovered; but I recommended them to put her to bed, and not to subject her to any unnecessary anguish, by a custom which was really too soul-piercing to endure. This, however, was, in her opinion, the violation of an old rite, sacred to her heart and affections—she would not hear of it for an instant. Again she was helped out between her brother and brother-in-law; and, after stooping down, and doing as the others had done—

"Now," said she, "I will sit here, and keep him under my eye as long as I can—surely you won't blame me for it; you all know the kind husband he was to me, and the good right I have to be sorry for him! Oh!" she added, "is it thrue at all?—is he, my own Denis, the young husband of my early—and my first love, in good airnest, dead, and going to leave me here—me, Denis, that you loved so tindherly, and our childher, that your brow was never clouded aginst? Can I believe myself, or is it a dhrame? Denis, *avick machree! avick machree!* your hand was dreaded, and a good right it had, for it was the manly hand, that was ever and always raised in defence of them that wanted a friend; abroad, in the faction-fight, against the oppressor, your name was ever

feared, *acushla!*—but *at home*—AT HOME—*where was your fellow?* Denis *aghra*, do you know the lips that's spaking to you?—your young bride—your heart's light—Oh! I remimber the day you war married to me like yesterday. Oh! avourneen, then and since wasn't the heart of your own Honor bound up in you—yet not a word even to me. Well, *aghra machree*, 'tisn't your fault, it's the first time you ever refused to spake to your own Honor. But you're dead, avourneen, or it wouldn't be so—you're dead before my eyes—husband of my heart, and all my hopes and happiness goes into the coffin and the grave along wid you, for ever!"

All this time she was rocking herself from side to side, her complexion pale and ghastly as could be conceived, and the tears streaming from her eyes. When the coffin was about to be closed, she retired until it was nailed down, after which she returned with her bonnet and cloak on her, ready to accompany it to the grave. I was astonished—for I thought she could not have walked two steps without assistance; but it was the custom, and to neglect it, I found, would have thrown the imputation of insincerity upon her grief. While they were preparing to bring the coffin out, I could hear the chat and conversation of those who were standing in crowds before the door, and occasionally a loud, vacant laugh, and sometimes a volley of them, responsive to the jokes of some rustic wit, probably the same person who acted master of the revels at the wake.

Before the coffin was finally closed, Ned Corrigan, whom I had put to flight the preceding night, came up, and repeated the *De Profundis*, in very strange Latin, over the corpse. When this was finished, he got a jug of holy water, and after dipping his thumb in it, first made the sign of the cross upon his own forehead, and afterwards sprinkled it upon all present, giving my brother and myself an extra compliment, supposing, probably, that we stood most in need of it. When this was over, he sprinkled the corpse and the coffin in particular most profusely. He then placed two pebbles from Lough Derg, and a bit of holy candle, upon the breast of the corpse, and having said a *Pater* and *Ave*, in which he was joined by the people, he closed the lid, and nailed it down.

"Ned," said his brother, "are his feet and his toes loose?"

"Musha, but that's more than myself knows," replied Ned—"Are they, Katty?" said he, enquiring from the sister of the deceased.

"Arrah, to be sure, avourneen!" answered Katty—"do you think we would lave him to be tied that way, when he'd be risin' out of his last bed at the day of judgment? Wouldn't it be too bad to have his toes tied thin, avourneen?"

The coffin was then brought out and placed upon four chairs before the door, to be keened; and, in the meantime, the friends and well-wishers of the deceased were brought into the room to get each a glass of whisky, as a token

of respect. I observed also, that such as had not seen any of Kelly's relations until then, came up, and shaking hands with them, said: "I'm sorry for your loss!" This expression of condolence was uniform, and the usual reply was: "Thank you, Mat, or Jim!" with a pluck of the skirt, accompanied by a significant nod, to follow. They then got a due share of whisky; and it was curious, after they came out, their faces a little flushed, and their eyes watery with the strong, ardent spirits, to hear with what heartiness and alacrity they entered into Denis's praises.

When he had been keened in the street, there being no hearse, the coffin was placed upon two handspikes which were fixed across, but parallel to each other under it. These were borne by four men, one at the end of each, with the point of it crossing his body a little below his stomach; in other parts of Ireland the coffin is borne upon a bier on the shoulders, but this is more convenient and less distressing.

When we got out upon the road, the funeral was of great extent—for Kelly had been highly respected. On arriving at the *merin* which bounded the land he had owned, the coffin was laid down, and a loud and wailing *keene* took place over it. It was again raised, and the funeral proceeded in a direction which I was surprised to see it take, and it was not until an acquaintance of my brother's had explained the matter that I understood the cause of it. In Ireland, when a murder is perpetrated, it is

sometimes usual, as the funeral proceeds to the graveyard, to bring the corpse to the house of him who committed the crime, and lay it down at his door, while the relations of the deceased kneel down, and, with an appalling solemnity, utter the deepest imprecations, and invoke the justice of heaven on the head of the murderer. This, however, is generally omitted if the residence of the criminal be completely out of the line of the funeral, but if it be possible, by any circuit, to approach it, this dark ceremony is never omitted. In cases where the crime is doubtful, or unjustly imputed, those who are thus visited come out, and laying their right hand upon the coffin, protest their innocence of the blood of the deceased, calling God to witness the truth of their asseverations; but, in cases where the crime is clearly proved against the murderer, the door is either closed, the ceremony repelled by violence, or the house abandoned by the inmates until the funeral passes.

The death of Kelly, however, could not be actually, or, at least, directly, considered a murder, for it was probable that Grimes did not inflict the stroke with an intention of taking away his life, and, besides, Kelly survived it four months. Grimes's house was not more than fifteen perches from the road: and when the corpse was opposite the little bridle-way that led up to it, they laid it down for a moment, and the relations of Kelly surrounded it, offering up a short prayer, with uncovered heads. It was then borne toward the house,

whilst the keening commenced in a loud and wailing cry, accompanied with clapping of hands, and every other symptom of external sorrow. But, independent of their compliance with this ceremony, as an old usage, there is little doubt that the appearance of anything connected with the man who certainly occasioned Kelly's death awoke a keener and more intense sorrow for his loss. The wailing was thus continued until the coffin was laid opposite Grimes's door; nor did it cease then, but, on the contrary, was renewed with louder and more bitter lamentations.

As the multitude stood compassionating the affliction of the widow and orphans, it was the most impressive and solemn spectacle that could be witnessed. The very house seemed to have a condemned look; and, as a single wintry breeze waved a tuft of long grass that grew on a seat of turf at the side of the door, it brought the vanity of human enmity before my mind with melancholy force. When the keening ceased, Kelly's wife, with her children, knelt, their faces towards the house of their enemy, and invoked, in the strong language of excited passion, the justice of heaven upon the head of the man who had left her a widow, and her children fatherless. I was anxious to know if Grimes would appear to disclaim the intention of murder; but I understood that he was at market—for it happened to be market-day.

"Come out!" said the widow—"come out, and look at the sight that's here before you!

Come and view *your own work*! Lay but your hand upon the coffin, and the blood of him you murdhered will spout, before God and these Christian people, in your guilty face! But, oh! may the Almighty God bring *this home to you*!—May you never lave this life, John Grimes, till worse nor has overtaken me and mine falls upon you and yours! May our curse light upon you this day!—the curse, I say, of the widow and the orphans, that your bloody hand has made us, may it blast you! May you, and all belonging to you, wither off the airth! Night and day, sleeping and waking—like snow off the ditch may you melt, until your name and your place be disremimbered, except to be cursed by them that will hear of you and your hand of murdher! Amin, we pray God this day!—and the widow and orphans' prayer will not fall to the ground while your guilty head is above it! Childher, did you all say it?"

At this moment a deep, terrific murmur, or rather ejaculation, corroborative of assent to this dreadful imprecation, pervaded the crowd in a fearful manner; their countenances darkened, their eyes gleamed, and their scowling visages stiffened into an expression of determined vengeance.

When these awful words were uttered, Grimes's wife and daughters approached the window in tears, sobbing, at the same time, loudly and bitterly.

"You're wrong," said the wife—"you're wrong, Widow Kelly, in saying that my husband *murdhered* him!—he did *not* murdher him; for,

when you and yours were far from him, I heard John Grimes declare before the God who's to judge him that he had no thought or intention of taking his life; he struck him in anger, and the blow did him an injury that was not intended. Don't curse him, Honor Kelly," said she, "don't curse him so fearfully; but, above all, don't curse me and my innocent childher, for *we* never harmed you, nor wished you ill! *But it was this party work did it!* Oh, my God!" she exclaimed, wringing her hands in utter bitterness of spirit, "when will it be ended between friends and neighbours, that ought to live in love and kindness together, instead of fighting in this bloodthirsty manner!"

She then wept more violently, as did her daughters.

"May God give me mercy in the last day, Mrs. Kelly, as I pity from my heart and soul you and your orphans," she continued; "but don't curse us, for the love of God—for you know we should forgive our enemies, as we ourselves, that are the enemies of God, hope to be forgiven."

"May God forgive me, then, if I have wronged you or your husband," said the widow, softened by their distress; "but you know that, whether he intended his life or not, the stroke he gave him has left my childher without a father, and myself dissolate. Oh, heavens above me!" she exclaimed, in a scream of distraction and despair, "is it possible—is it thrue—that my manly husband—the best father that ever breathed the breath of life—

my own Denis, is lying dead—murdhered before my eyes? Put your hands on my head, some of you—put your hands on my head, or it will go to pieces. Where are you, Denis—where are you, the strong of hand, and the tender of heart? Come to me, darling, I want you in my distress. I want comfort, Denis; and I'll take it from none but yourself, for kind was your word to me in all my afflictions!"

All present were affected; and, indeed, it was difficult to say whether Kelly's wife or Grimes's was more to be pitied at the moment. The affliction of the latter and of her daughters was really pitiable; their sobs were loud, and the tears streamed down their cheeks like rain. When the widow's exclamations had ceased, or rather were lost in the loud cries of sorrow which were uttered by the keeners and friends of the deceased—they, too, standing somewhat apart from the rest, joined in it bitterly; and the solitary wail of Mrs. Grimes, differing in character from that of those who had been trained to modulate the most profound grief into strains of a melancholy nature, was particularly wild and impressive. At all events, her Christian demeanour, joined to the sincerity of her grief, appeased the enmity of many; so true is it that a soft answer turneth away wrath. I could perceive, however, that the resentment of Kelly's male relations did not appear to be in any degree moderated.

The funeral again proceeded, and I remarked that whenever a strange passenger happened to meet it, he always turned back, and accom-

"In that case," replied his reverence, laughing heartily, "your only plan is to return it to the bosom of the church, by laying it on the plate here—it will then be *within the pale*, you know."

This reply produced a great deal of good-humour among that part of the crowd which immediately surrounded them—not excepting the dead man's nearest relations, who laughed heartily.

"Well," said my brother, as he laid it on the plate, "how many prayers will you offer up in my favour for this?"

"Leave *that* to myself," said his Reverence, looking at the *money*; "it will be before you, I say, when you go to St. Peter."

He then held the plate over to me in a droll manner; and I added another guinea to my brother's gift; for which I had the satisfaction of having my name called out so loud that it might be heard a quarter of a mile off.

"God bless you, sir," said the priest, "and I thank you."

"John," said I, when he left us, "I think that is a pleasant, and rather a sensible man."

"He's as jovial a soul," replied my brother, "as ever gave birth to a jest, and he sings a right good song. Many a convivial hour have he and I spent together; and a more hospitable man, besides, never yet existed. Although firmly attached to his own religion, he is no bigot; but, on the contrary, an excellent, liberal, and benevolent man."

When the offerings were all collected, he re-
turned to the altar, repeated a few additional
prayers in prime style—as rapid as lightning;
and after hastily shaking the holy water on the
crowd, the funeral moved on. It was now two
o'clock, the day clear and frosty, and the sun
unusually bright for the season. During mass,
many were added to those who formed the
funeral train at the outset; so that, when we
got out upon the road, the procession appeared
very large. After this few or none joined it;
for it is esteemed by no means "*decent*" to do
so *after* mass, because, in that case, the matter
is ascribed to an evasion of the offerings; but
those whose delay has not really been oc-
casioned by this motive make it a point to pay
them at the graveyard, or after the interment,
and sometimes even on the following day—so
jealous are the peasantry of having any degrad-
ing suspicion attached to their generosity.
The order of the funeral now was as follows:
—Foremost the women—next to them the
corpse, surrounded by the relations—the eldest
son, in deep affliction, "led the coffin", as
chief mourner, holding in his hand the corner
of a sheet or piece of linen fastened to the
mort-cloth, called moor-cloth. After the coffin
came those who were on foot, and in the rear
were the equestrians. When we were a quarter
of a mile from the churchyard, the funeral was
met by a dozen of singing-boys, belonging to
a chapel choir, which the priest, who was fond
of music, had some time before formed. They
fell in, two by two, immediately behind the

corpse, and commenced singing the *Requiem*, or Latin hymn for the dead.

The scene through which we passed at this time, though not clothed with the verdure and luxuriant beauty of summer, was, nevertheless, marked by that solemn and decaying splendour which characterizes a fine country, lit up by the melancholy light of a winter setting sun. It was, therefore, much more in character with the occasion. Indeed I felt it altogether beautiful; and, as the "dying day-hymn stole aloft", the dim sunbeams fell, through a vista of naked motionless trees, upon the coffin, which was borne with a slower and more funeral pace than before, in a manner that threw a solemn and visionary light upon the whole procession. This, however, was raised to something dreadfully impressive when the long train, thus proceeding with a motion so mournful, was seen, each, or at least the majority of them, covered with a profusion of crimson ribbons, to indicate that the corpse they bore owed his death to a deed of murder. The circumstance of the sun glancing his rays upon the coffin was not unobserved by the peasantry, who considered it as a good omen to the spirit of the departed.

As we went up the street which had been the scene of the quarrel that proved so fatal to Kelly, the coffin was again laid down on the spot where he received his death-blows; and, as was usual, the wild and melancholy *Ierne* was raised. My brother saw many of Grimes's friends among the spectators, but he himself

was not visible. Whether Kelly's party saw them or not, we could not say; if they did, they seemed not to notice them, for no expression of revenge or indignation escaped them.

At length we entered the last receptacle of the dead. The coffin was now placed upon the shoulders of the son and brothers of the deceased, and borne round the churchyard; whilst the priest, with his stole upon him, preceded it, reading prayers for the eternal repose of the soul. Being then laid beside the grave, a "De profundis" was repeated by the priest and the mass-server; after which a portion of fresh clay, carried from the fields, was brought to his reverence, who read a prayer over it, and consecrated it. This is a ceremony which is never omitted at the interment of a Roman Catholic. When it was over, the coffin was lowered into the grave, and the blessed clay shaken over it. The priest now took the shovel in his own hands, and threw in the three first shovelfuls—one in the name of the Father, one in the name of the Son, and one in the name of the Holy Ghost. The sexton then took it, and in a short time Denis Kelly was fixed for ever in his narrow bed.

While these ceremonies were going forward, the churchyard presented a characteristic picture. Beside the usual groups who straggle through the place, to amuse themselves by reading the inscriptions on the tombs, you might see many individuals kneeling on particular graves, where some relation lay—for the benefit of whose soul they offered up their prayers

with an attachment and devotion which one cannot but admire. Sometimes all the surviving members of the family would assemble, and repeat a *Rosary* for the same purpose. Again, you might see an unhappy woman beside a newly-made grave, giving way to lamentation and sorrow for the loss of a husband, or of some beloved child. Here, you might observe the "last bed" ornamented with hoops, decked in white paper, emblematic of the virgin innocence of the individual who slept below;—there, a little board-cross informing you that "this monument was erected by a disconsolate husband to the memory of his beloved wife". But that which excited greatest curiosity was a sycamore-tree, which grew in the middle of the burying-ground.

It is necessary to inform the reader that in Ireland many of the churchyards are exclusively appropriated to the interment of Roman Catholics, and, consequently, the corpse of no one who had been a Protestant would be permitted to pollute or desecrate them. This was one of them: but it appears that, by some means or other, the body of a Protestant *had* been interred in it—and hear the consequence! The next morning heaven marked its disapprobation of this awful visitation by a miracle; for, ere the sun rose from the east, a full-grown sycamore had shot up out of the heretical grave, and stands there to this day, a monument at once of the profanation and its consequence. Crowds were looking at this tree, feeling a kind of awe, mingled with wonder, at the deed which

drew down such a visible and lasting mark of God's displeasure. On the tombstones near Kelly's grave, men and women were seated, smoking tobacco to their very heart's content; for, with that profusion which characterizes the Irish in everything, they had brought out large quantities of tobacco, whisky, and bunches of pipes. On such occasions it is the custom for those who attend the wake or the funeral to bring a full pipe home with them; and it is expected that, as often as it is used, they will remember to say: "God be merciful to the soul of him that this pipe was over".

The crowd, however, now began to disperse; and the immediate friends of the deceased sent the priest, accompanied by Kelly's brother, to request that we would come in, as the last mark of respect to poor Denis's memory, and take a glass of wine and a cake.

"Come, Toby," said my brother, "we may as well go in, as it will gratify them; we need not make much delay, and we will still be at home in sufficient time for dinner."

"Certainly you will," said the priest; "for you shall both come and dine with me to-day."

"With all my heart," said my brother; "I have no objection, for I know you give it good."

When we went in, the punch was already reeking from immense white jugs that couldn't hold less than a gallon each.

"Now," said his reverence, very properly, "you have had a decent and creditable funeral, and have managed everything with great pro-

priety; let me request, therefore, that you will not get drunk, nor permit yourselves to enter into any disputes or quarrels; but be moderate in what you take, and go home peaceably."

"Why, thin, your reverence," replied the widow, "he's now in his grave, and, thank God, it's he that had the dacent funeral all out—ten good gallons did we put over you, astore, and it's yourself that liked the dacent thing, anyhow—but sure, sir, it would shame him where he's lyin', if we disregarded him so far as to go home widout bringing in our friends, that didn't desart us in our throuble, an' thratin' them for their kindness."

While Kelly's brother was filling out all their glasses, the priest, my brother, and I, were taking a little refreshment. When the glasses were filled, the deceased's brother raised his in hand, and said:

"Well, gintlemen," addressing us, "I hope you'll pardon me for not dhrinking your healths first; but people, you know, can't break through an ould custom, at any rate—so I give poor Denis's health that's in his *warm* grave, and God be merciful to his sowl."

The priest now winked at me to give them their own way; so we filled our glasses, and joined the rest in drinking "Poor Denis's health, that's now in his warm grave, and God be merciful to his soul."

When this was finished, they then drank ours, and thanked us for our kindness in attending the funeral. It was now past five o'clock; and we left them just setting into a hard bout of

drinking, and rode down to his reverence's residence.

"I saw you smile," said he, on our way, "at the blundering toast of Mat Kelly; but it would be labour in vain to attempt setting them right. What do they know about the distinctions of more refined life? Besides, I maintain, that what they said was as well calculated to express their affection as if they had drunk honest Denis's *memory*. It is, at least, unsophisticated. But did you hear," said he, "of the apparition that was seen last night, on the mountain road above Denis's?"

"I did not *hear* of it," I replied, equivocating a little.

"Why," said he, "it is currently reported that the spirit of a murdered pedlar, which haunts the hollow of the road at Drumfurrar bridge, chased away the two servant men as they were bringing home the coffin, and that, finding it a good fit, he got into it, and walked half a mile along the road, with the wooden surtout upon him; and, finally, that to wind up the frolic, he left it on one end half-way between the bridge and Denis's house, after putting a crowd of the countrymen to flight. I suspect some droll knave has played them a trick. I assure you, that a deputation of them, who declared that they saw the coffin move along of itself, waited upon me this morning, to know whether they ought to have put him into the coffin, or gotten another."

"Well," said my brother, in reply to him, "after dinner we will probably throw some

light upon that circumstance; for I believe my brother here knows something about it."

"So, sir," said the priest, "I perceive you have been amusing yourself at their expense."

I seldom spent a pleasanter evening than I did with Father Molloy (so he was called), who was, as my brother said, a shrewd, sensible man, possessed of convivial powers of the first order. He sang us several good songs; and, to do him justice, he had an excellent voice. He regretted very much the state of party and religious feeling, which he did everything in his power to suppress.

"But," said he, "I have little co-operation in my efforts to communicate knowledge to my flock, and implant better feelings among them. You must know," he added, "that I am no great favourite with them. On being appointed to this parish by my bishop, I found that the young man who was curate to my predecessor had formed a party against me, thinking, by that means, eventually to get the parish himself. Accordingly, on coming here, I found the chapel doors closed on me; so that a single individual among them would not recognize me as their proper pastor. By firmness and spirit, however, I at length succeeded, after a long struggle against the influence of the curate, in gaining admission to the altar; and, by a proper representation of his conduct to the bishop, I soon made my gentleman knock under. Although beginning to gain ground in the good opinion of the people, I am by no means yet a favourite. The curate and I

scarcely speak; but I hope that, in the course of time, both he and they will begin to find that, by kindness and a sincere love for their welfare on my part, goodwill and affection will ultimately be established among us. At least, there shall be nothing left undone, so far as I am concerned, to effect it."

It was now near nine o'clock, and my brother was beginning to relate an anecdote concerning the clergyman who had preceded Father Molloy in the parish, when a messenger from Mr. Wilson, already alluded to, came up in breathless haste, requesting the priest, for God's sake, to go down into town instantly, as the Kellys and the Grimeses were engaged in a fresh quarrel.

"My God!" he exclaimed—"when will this work have an end? But, to tell you the truth, gentlemen, I apprehended it; and I fear that something still more fatal to the parties will yet be the consequence. Mr. D'Arcy, you must try what you can do with the Grimeses, and I will manage the Kellys."

We then proceeded to the town, which was but a very short distance from the priest's house; and, on arriving, found a large crowd before the door of the house in which the Kellys had been drinking, engaged in hard conflict. The priest was on foot, and had brought his whip with him, it being an argument, in the hands of a Roman Catholic pastor, which tells so home that it is seldom gainsaid. Mr. Molloy and my brother now dashed in amongst them; and by remonstrance, abuse, blows, and

entreaty, they with difficulty succeeded in terminating the fight. They were also assisted by Mr. Wilson and other persons, who dared not, until their appearance, run the risk of interfering between them. Wilson's servant, who had come for the priest, was still standing beside me, looking on; and, while my brother and Mr. Molloy were separating the parties, I asked him how the fray commenced.

"Why, sir," said he, "it bein' market-day, the Grimeses chanced to be in town, and this came to the ears of the Kellys, who were drinking in Cassidy's here, till they got tipsy; some of them then broke out, and began to go up and down the street, shouting for the face of a murdhering Grimes. The Grimeses, sir, happened at the time to be drinking with a parcel of their friends in Joe Sherlock's, and hearing the Kellys calling out for them, why, as the dhrop, sir, was *in* on both sides, they were soon at it. Grimes has given one of the Kellys a great bating; but Tom Grogan, Kelly's cousin, a little before we came down, I'm tould, has knocked the seven senses out of him, with a pelt of a brick-bat in the stomach."

Soon after this, however, the quarrel was got under; and, in order to prevent any more bloodshed that night, my brother and I got the Kellys together, and brought them as far as our residence, on their way home. As they went along, they uttered awful vows, and determinations of the deepest revenge, swearing repeatedly that they would shoot Grimes from behind a ditch, if they could not in any other

manner have his blood. They seemed highly intoxicated; and several of them were cut and abused in a dreadful manner; even the women were in such a state of excitement and alarm that grief for the deceased was, in many instances, forgotten. Several of both sexes were singing; some laughing with triumph at the punishment they had inflicted on the enemy; others of them, softened by what they had drunk, were weeping in tones of sorrow that might be heard a couple of miles off. Among the latter were many of the men, some of whom, as they staggered along, with their frieze big-coats hanging off one shoulder, clapped their hands, and roared like bulls, as if they intended, by the loudness of their grief then, to compensate for their silence when sober. It was also quite ludicrous to see the men kissing each other, sometimes in this maudlin sorrow, and at others when exalted into the very madness of mirth. Such as had been cut in the scuffle, on finding the blood trickle down their faces, would wipe it off—then look at it, and break out into a parenthetical volley of curses against the Grimeses; after which they would resume their grief, hug each other in mutual sorrow, and clap their hands as before. In short, such a group could be seen nowhere but in Ireland.

When my brother and I had separated from them, I asked him what had become of Vengeance, and if he were still in the country.

"No," said he; "with all his courage and watchfulness he found that his life was not safe; he, accordingly, sold off his property,

and collecting all his ready cash, emigrated to America, where, I hear, he is doing well."

"God knows," I replied, "I shouldn't be surprised if one-half of the population were to follow his example, for the state of society here, among the lower orders, is truly deplorable." "Ay, but you are to consider now," he replied, "that you have been looking at the worst of it. If you pass an unfavourable opinion upon our countrymen when in the public-house or the quarrel, you ought to remember what they are under their own roofs, and in all the relations of private life."

The "Party Fight", described in the foregoing sketch, is unhappily no fiction, and it is certain that there are thousands still alive who have good reason to remember it. Such a fight, or I should rather say battle—for such in fact it was—did take place in a state of civil society, if I can say so, within the last half-century in this country. The preparations for it were secretly being made for two or three months previous to its occurrence, and however it came to light, it so happened that each party became cognizant of the designs of the other. This tremendous conflict, of which I was an eye-witness — being then but about twelve years of age,—took place in the town, or rather city, of Clogher, in my native county of Tyrone. The reader may form an opinion of the bitterness and ferocity with which it was fought on both sides when he is informed that the Orangemen on one side, and the Ribbonmen on the other, had called in aid

from the surrounding counties of Monaghan, Cavan, Fermanagh, and Derry; and, if I mistake not, also from Louth. In numbers, the belligerents could not have been less than from four to five thousand men. The fair day on which it occurred is known simply as "the Day of the great Fight".

and there, under the scorching rays of a summer sun, and in defiance of spies and statutes, carried on the work of instruction. From this circumstance the name of Hedge School originated; and, however it may be associated with the ludicrous, I maintain that it is highly creditable to the character of the people, and an encouragement to those who wish to see them receive pure and correct educational knowledge. A Hedge School, however, in its original sense, was but a temporary establishment, being only adopted until such a school-house could be erected as was in those days deemed sufficient to hold such a number of children as were expected, at all hazards, to attend it.

The opinion, I know, which has been long entertained of Hedge Schoolmasters was, and still is, unfavourable; but the character of these worthy and eccentric persons has been misunderstood, for the stigma attached to their want of knowledge should have rather been applied to their want of morals, because on this latter point were they principally indefensible. The fact is, that Hedge Schoolmasters were a class of men from whom morality was not expected by the peasantry; for, strange to say, one of their strongest recommendations to the good opinion of the people, as far as their literary talents and qualifications were concerned, was an inordinate love of whisky, and if to this could be added a slight touch of derangement, the character was complete.

On once asking an Irish peasant why he

sent his children to a schoolmaster who was notoriously addicted to spirituous liquors, rather than to a man of sober habits who taught in the same neighbourhood,

"Why do I send them to Mat Meegan, is it?" he replied—"and do you think, sir," said he, "that I'd send them to that dry-headed dunce, Mr. Frazher, with his black coat upon him, and his caroline hat, and him wouldn't take a glass of poteen wanst in seven years? Mat, sir, likes it, and teaches the boys ten times betther whin he's dhrunk nor when he's sober; and you'll never find a good tacher, sir, but's fond of it. As for Mat, when he's *half gone*, I'd turn him agin the country for deepness in larning; for it's then he rhymes it out of him, that it would do one good to hear him."

"So," said I, "you think that a love of drinking poteen is a sign of talent in a schoolmaster?"

"Ay, or in any man else, sir," he replied. "Look at tradesmen, and 'tis always the cleverest that you'll find fond of the dhrink! If you had hard Mat and Frazher, the other evening, at it—what a hare Mat made of him! but he was just in proper tune for it, being, at the time, purty well I thank you, and did not lave him a leg to stand upon. He took him in Euclid's Ailments and Logicals, and proved in Frazher's teeth that the candlestick before them was the church steeple, and Frazher himself the parson; and so sign was on it, the other couldn't disprove it, but had to give in."

"Mat, then," I observed, "is the most learned man on this walk."

"Why, thin, I doubt that same, sir," replied he, "for all he's so great in the books; for, you see, while they were ding dust at it, who comes in but mad Delany, and he attacked Mat, and, in less than no time, rubbed the consate out of *him*, as clane as *he* did out of Frazher."

"Who is Delany?" I enquired.

"He was the makings of a priest, sir, and was in Maynooth a couple of years, but he took in the knowledge so fast, that, bedad! he got *cracked wid larnin'*—for a *dunce*, you see, never cracks wid it, in regard of the thickness of the skull: no doubt but he's too many for Mat, and can go far beyant him in the books; but then, like Mat, he's still brightest whin he has a sup in his head."

These are prejudices which the Irish peasantry have long entertained concerning the character of Hedge Schoolmasters; but, granting them to be unfounded, as they generally are, yet it is an indisputable fact that Hedge Schoolmasters were as superior in literary knowledge and acquirements to the class of men who are now engaged in the general education of the people, as they were beneath them in moral and religious character. The former part of this assertion will, I am aware, appear rather startling to many. But it is true; and one great cause why the character of Society Teachers is misunderstood, in many instances, by the people proceeds from a conviction on

their parts that they are, and must be, incapable, from the slender portion of learning they have received, of giving their children a sound and practical education.

But that we may put this subject in a clearer light, we will give a sketch of the course of instruction which was deemed necessary for a Hedge Schoolmaster, and let it be contrasted with that which falls to the lot of those engaged in the conducting of schools patronized by the Education Societies of the present day.

When a poor man, about twenty or thirty years ago, understood from the schoolmaster who educated his sons, that any of them was particularly "cute at his larnin'," the ambition of the parent usually directed itself to one of three objects—he would either make him a priest, a clerk, or a schoolmaster. The determination once fixed, the boy was set apart from every kind of labour, that he might be at liberty to bestow his undivided time and talents to the object set before him. His parents strained every nerve to furnish him with the necessary books, and always took care that his appearance and dress should be more decent than those of any other member of the family. If the church were in prospect, he was distinguished, after he had been two or three years at his Latin, by the appellation of "the young priest", an epithet to him of the greatest pride and honour; but if destined only to wield the ferula, his importance in the family, and the narrow circle of his friends, was by no means so great. If, however, the

goal of his future ambition as a schoolmaster was humbler, that of his literary career was considerably extended. He usually remained at the next school in the vicinity until he supposed that he had completely drained the master of all his knowledge. This circumstance was generally discovered in the following manner:—As soon as he judged himself a match for his teacher, and possessed sufficient confidence in his own powers, he penned him a formal challenge to meet him in literary contest, either in his own school, before competent witnesses, or at the chapel green, on the Sabbath day, before the arrival of the priest, or probably after it—for the priest himself was sometimes the moderator and judge upon these occasions. This challenge was generally couched in rhyme, and either sent by the hands of a common friend, or posted upon the chapel door.

These contests, as the reader perceives, were always public, and were witnessed by the peasantry with intense interest. If the master sustained a defeat, it was not so much attributed to his want of learning, as to the overwhelming talent of his opponent; nor was the success of the student generally followed by the expulsion of the master—for this was but the first of a series of challenges which the former proposed to undertake, ere he eventually settled himself in the exercise of his profession.

I remember being present at one of them, and a ludicrous exhibition it was. The parish priest, a red-faced, jocular little man, was presi-

dent; and his curate, a scholar of six feet two inches in height, and a schoolmaster from the next parish, were judges. I will only touch upon two circumstances in their conduct, which evinced a close, instinctive knowledge of human nature in the combatants. The master would not condescend to argue off his throne—a piece of policy to which, in my opinion, he owed his victory (for he won); whereas the pupil insisted that he should meet him on equal ground, face to face, in the lower end of the room. It was evident that the latter could not divest himself of his boyish terror so long as the other sat, as it were, in the plenitude of his former authority, contracting his brows with habitual sternness, thundering out his arguments with a most menacing and stentorian voice, while he thumped his desk with his shut fist, or struck it with his great ruler at the end of each argument, in a manner that made the youngster put his hands behind him several times, to be certain that that portion of his dress which is *unmentionable* was tight upon him.

If in these encounters the young candidate for the honours of the literary sceptre was not victorious, he again resumed his studies, under his old preceptor, with renewed vigour and becoming humility; but if he put the schoolmaster down, his next object was to seek out some other teacher, whose celebrity was unclouded, within his own range. With him he had a fresh encounter, and its result was similar to what I have already related. If

victorious, he sought out another and more learned opponent; and if defeated, he became the pupil of his conqueror—going night about, during his sojourn at the school, with the neighbouring farmers' sons, whom he assisted in their studies, as a compensation for his support. He was called, during these peregrinations, the *Poor Scholar*, a character which secured him the esteem and hospitable attention of the peasantry, who never fail in respect to anyone characterized by a zeal for learning and knowledge.

In this manner he proceeded, a literary knight errant, filled with a chivalrous love of letters, which would have done honour to the most learned peripatetic of them all; enlarging his own powers, and making fresh acquisitions of knowledge as he went along. His contests, his defeats, and his triumphs, of course, were frequent; and his habits of thinking and reasoning must have been considerably improved, his acquaintance with classical and mathematical authors rendered more intimate, and his powers of illustration and comparison more clear and happy. After three or four years spent in this manner, he usually returned to his native place, sent another challenge to the schoolmaster, in the capacity of a candidate for his situation, and, if successful, drove him out of the district, and established himself in his situation. The vanquished master sought a new district, sent a new challenge, in his turn, to some other teacher, and usually put him to flight in the same manner. The terms

of defeat or victory, according to their application, were called *sacking* and *bogging*.

"There was a great argument entirely, sir," said a peasant once, when speaking of these contests; "'twas at the chapel on Sunday week, betune young Tom Brady, that was a poor scholar in Munsther, and Mr. Hartigan, the schoolmaster."

"And who was victorious?" I enquired.

"Why, sir, and maybe 'twas young Brady that didn't *sack* him clane before the priest and all, and went nigh to *bog* the priest himself in Greek. His reverence was only two words beyant him; but he sacked the masther anyhow, and showed him in the Grammatical and Dixonary where he was wrong."

"And what is Brady's object in life?" I asked. "What does he intend to do?"

"Intend to do, is it? I'm tould nothing less nor going into Thrinity College in Dublin, and expects to bate them all there, out and out: he's first to make something they call a seizure; and, afther making that good, he's to be a counsellor. So, sir, you see what it is to resave good schoolin', and to have the larnin'; but, indeed, it's Brady that's the great head-piece entirely."

Unquestionably, many who received instruction in this manner have distinguished themselves in the Dublin University: and I have no hesitation in saying that young men educated in Irish Hedge Schools, as they were called, have proved themselves to be better classical scholars and mathematicians, generally speaking, than

any proportionate number of those educated in our first-rate academies. The Munster masters have long been, and still are, particularly celebrated for making excellent classical and mathematical scholars.

That a great deal of ludicrous pedantry generally accompanied this knowledge is not at all surprising when we consider the rank these worthy teachers held in life, and the stretch of inflation at which their pride was kept by the profound reverence excited by their learning among the people. It is equally true that each of them had a stock of *crambos* ready for accidental encounter, which would have puzzled Euclid or Sir Isaac Newton himself; but even these trained their minds to habits of acuteness and investigation. When a schoolmaster of this class had established himself as a good mathematician, the predominant enjoyment of his heart and life was to write the epithet *Philomath* after his name; and this, whatever document he subscribed, was never omitted. If he witnessed a will, it was Timothy Fagan, Philomath; if he put his name to a promissory note, it was Tim. Fagan, Philomath; if he addressed a love-letter to his sweetheart, it was still Timothy Fagan—or whatever the name might be,—Philomath; and this was always written in legible and distinct copyhand, sufficiently large to attract the observation of the reader.

It was also usual for a man who had been a pre-eminent and extraordinary scholar to have the epithet GREAT prefixed to his name. I remember one of this description, who was

called the *Great O'Brien, par excellence.* In the latter years of his life he gave up teaching, and led a circulating life, going round from school to school, and remaining a week or a month alternately among his brethren. His visits were considered an honour, and raised considerably the literary character of those with whom he resided; for he spoke of dunces with the most dignified contempt, and the general impression was, that he would scorn even to avail himself of their hospitality. Like most of his brethren, he could not live without the *poteen*; and his custom was to drink a pint of it in its native purity before he entered into any literary contest, or made any display of his learning at wakes or other Irish festivities; and most certainly, however blamable the practice, and injurious to health and morals, it threw out his talents and his powers in a most surprising manner.

It was highly amusing to observe the peculiarity which the consciousness of superior knowledge impressed upon the conversation and personal appearance of this decaying race. Whatever might have been the original conformation of their physical structure, it was sure, by the force of acquired habit, to transform itself into a stiff, erect, consequential, and unbending manner, ludicrously characteristic of an inflated sense of their extraordinary knowledge, and a proud and commiserating contempt of the dark ignorance by which, in despite of their own light, they were surrounded. Their conversation, like their own *crambos*, was dark and

difficult to be understood; their words, truly sesquipedalian; their voice, loud and commanding in its tones; their deportment, grave and dictatorial, but completely indescribable, and certainly original to the last degree in those instances where the ready, genuine humour of their country maintained an unyielding rivalry in their disposition against the natural solemnity which was considered necessary to keep up the due dignity of their character.

In many of these persons, where the original gaiety of the disposition was known, all efforts at the grave and dignified were complete failures, and these were enjoyed by the peasantry and their own pupils nearly with the sensations which the enactment of Hamlet by Liston would necessarily produce. At all events, their education, allowing for the usual exceptions, was by no means superficial; and the reader has already received a sketch of the trials which they had to undergo, before they considered themselves qualified to enter upon the duties of their calling. Their life was, in act, a state of literary warfare; and they felt that a more elementary knowledge of their business would have been insufficient to carry them, with suitable credit, through the assaults to which they were exposed from travelling teachers, who have made of establishing themselves in which [illegible] said, by driving away the less qualified, and usurping their places. This, around up to a [illegible] and the custom which prevailed, [illegible] easily effected, for the [illegible] and [illegible] [illegible]

they supposed to be the most competent: as to moral or religious instruction, neither was expected from them, so that the indifference of the moral character was no bar to their success.

The village of Findramore was situated at the foot of a long green hill, the outline of which formed a low arch, as it rose to the eye against the horizon. This hill was studded with clumps of beeches, and sometimes enclosed as a meadow. In the month of July, when the grass on it was long, many an hour have I spent in solitary enjoyment, watching the wavy motion produced upon its pliant surface by the sunny winds, or the flight of the cloud-shadows, like gigantic phantoms, as they swept rapidly over it, whilst the murmur of the rocking trees, and the glancing of their bright leaves in the sun, produced a heartfelt pleasure, the very memory of which rises in my imagination like some fading recollection of a brighter world.

At the foot of this hill ran a clear, deep-banked river, bounded on one side by a slip of rich, level meadow, and on the other by a kind of common for the village geese, whose white feathers, during the summer season, lay scattered over its green surface. It was also the playground for the boys of the village school; for there ran that part of the river which, with very correct judgment, the urchins had selected as their bathing-place. A little slope, or watering-ground, in the bank brought them to the edge of the stream, where the bottom fell away into the fearful depths of the

whirlpool, under the hanging oak on the other bank. Well do I remember the first time I ventured to swim across it, and even yet do I see, in imagination, the two bunches of water-flagons on which the inexperienced swimmers trusted themselves in the water.

About two hundred yards above this, the *boreen*, which led from the village to the main road, crossed the river, by one of those old narrow bridges whose arches rise like round ditches across the road—an almost impassable barrier to horse and car. On passing the bridge, in a northern direction, you found a range of low thatched houses on each side of the road: and if one o'clock, the hour of dinner, drew near, you might observe columns of blue smoke curling up from a row of chimneys, some made of wicker creels plastered over with a rich coat of mud; some of old, narrow, bottomless tubs; and others, with a greater appearance of taste, ornamented with thick, circular ropes of straw, sewed together, like bees' skeps, with the peel of a brier; and many having nothing but the open vent above. But the smoke by no means escaped by its legitimate aperture, for you might observe little clouds of it bursting out of the doors and windows; the panes of the latter, being mostly stopped at other times with old hats and rags, were now left entirely open for the purpose of giving it a free escape.

Before the doors, on right and left, was a series of dunghills, each with its concomitant sink of green, rotten water; and if it happened

that a stout-looking woman, with watery eyes, and a yellow cap hung loosely upon her matted locks, came, with a chubby urchin on one arm, and a pot of dirty water in her hand, its unceremonious ejection in the aforesaid sink would be apt to send you up the village with your finger and thumb (for what purpose you would yourself perfectly understand) closely, but not knowingly, applied to your nostrils. But, independently of this, you would be apt to have other reasons for giving your horse, whose heels are by this time surrounded by a dozen of barking curs, and the same number of shouting urchins, a pretty sharp touch of the spurs, as well as for complaining bitterly of the odour of the atmosphere. It is no landscape without figures; and you might notice, if you are, as I suppose you to be, a man of observation, in every sink as you pass along, a "slip of a pig", stretched in the middle of the mud, the very *beau ideal* of luxury, giving occasionally a long, luxuriant grunt, highly expressive of his enjoyment; or, perhaps, an old farrower, lying in indolent repose, with half a dozen young ones jostling each other for their draught, and punching her belly with their little snouts, reckless of the fumes they are creating; whilst the loud crow of the cock, as he confidently flaps his wings on his own dunghill, gives the warning note for the hour of dinner.

As you advance, you will also perceive several faces thrust out of the doors, and rather than miss a sight of you, a grotesque visage peeping by

a short cut through the paneless windows—or a tattered female flying to snatch up her urchin that has been tumbling itself, heels up, in the dust of the road, lest "the gintleman's horse might ride over it"; and if you happen to look behind, you may observe a shaggy-headed youth in tattered frieze, with one hand thrust indolently in his breast, standing at the door in conversation with the inmates, a broad grin of sarcastic ridicule on his face, in the act of breaking a joke or two upon yourself, or your horse; or, perhaps, your jaw may be saluted with a lump of clay, just hard enough not to fall asunder as it flies, cast by some ragged gorsoon from behind a hedge, who squats himself in a ridge of corn to avoid detection.

Seated upon a hob at the door, you may observe a toil-worn man, without coat or waistcoat; his red, muscular, sunburnt shoulder peering through the remnant of a shirt, mending his shoes with a piece of twisted flax, called a *lingel*, or, perhaps, sewing two footless stockings (*or mertyeens*) to his coat, as a substitute for sleeves.

In the gardens, which are usually fringed with nettles, you will see a solitary labourer, working with that carelessness and apathy that characterizes an Irishman when he labours *for himself*—leaning upon his spade to look after you, and glad of any excuse to be idle.

The houses, however, are not all such as I have described—far from it. You see here and there, between the more humble cabins, a neat, comfortable-looking farmhouse, with

ornamental thatching and well-glazed windows; adjoining to which is a hay-yard, with five or six large stacks of corn, well-trimmed and roped, and a fine, yellow, weather-beaten old hay-rick, half cut—not taking into account twelve or thirteen circular strata of stones, that mark out the foundations on which others had been raised. Neither is the rich smell of oaten or wheaten bread, which the goodwife is baking on the griddle, unpleasant to your nostrils; nor would the bubbling of a large pot, in which you might see, should you chance to enter, a prodigious square of fat, yellow, and almost transparent bacon tumbling about, be an unpleasant object; truly, as it hangs over a large fire, with well-swept hearthstone, it is in good keeping with the white settle and chairs, and the dresser with noggins, wooden trenchers, and pewter dishes, perfectly clean, and as well polished as a French courtier.

As you leave the village, you have, to the left, a view of the hill which I have already described, and to the right a level expanse of fertile country, bounded by a good view of respectable mountains, peering decently into the sky; and in a line that forms an acute angle from the point of the road where you ride, is a delightful valley, in the bottom of which shines a pretty lake; and a little beyond, on the slope of a green hill, rises a splendid house, surrounded by a park, well-wooded and stocked with deer. You have now topped the little hill above the village, and a straight line of level road, a mile long, goes forward to a country town, which

lies immediately behind that white church, with its spire cutting into the sky, before you. You descend on the other side, and, having advanced a few perches, look to the left, where you see a long, thatched chapel, only distinguished from a dwelling-house by its want of chimneys, and a small stone cross that stands on the top of the eastern gable; behind it is a graveyard; and beside it a snug public-house, well white-washed; then, to the right, you observe a door apparently in the side of a clay bank, which rises considerably above the pavement of the road. What! you ask yourself, can this be a human habitation?—but ere you have time to answer the question, a confused buzz of voices from within reaches your ear, and the appearance of a little "gorsoon", with a red, close-cropped head and Milesian face, having in his hand a short, white stick, or the thigh-bone of a horse, which you at once recognize as "the pass" of a village school, gives you the full information. He has an ink-horn, covered with leather, dangling at the button-hole (for he has long since played away the buttons) of his frieze jacket—his mouth is circumscribed with a streak of ink—his pen is stuck knowingly behind his ear—his shins are dotted over with fire-blisters, black, red, and blue—on each heel a kibe—his "leather crackers", *videlicet*, breeches, shrunk up upon him, and only reaching as far down as the caps of his knees. Having spied you, he places his hand over his brows, to throw back the dazzling light of the sun, and peers at you from under it, till he

breaks out into a laugh, exclaiming, half to himself, half to you:

"You a gintleman!—no, nor one of your breed never was, you procthorin' thief, you!"

You are now immediately opposite the door of the seminary, when half a dozen of those seated next it notice you.

"Oh, sir, here's a gintleman on a horse!—masther, sir, here's a gintleman on a horse, wid boots and spurs on him, that's looking in at us."

"Silence!" exclaims the master; "back from the door; boys, rehearse; every one of you rehearse, I say, you Bœotians, till the gintleman goes past!"

"I want to go out, if you plase, sir."

"No, you don't, Phelim."

"I do, indeed, sir."

"What!—is it afther conthradictin' me you'd be! Don't you see the 'porter's' out, and you can't go."

"Well, 'tis Mat Meehan has it, sir: and he's out this half-hour, sir; I can't stay in, sir—iphfff—iphfff!"

"You want to be idling your time looking at the gintleman, Phelim."

"No, indeed, sir—iphfff!"

"Phelim, I know you of ould—go to your sate. I tell you, Phelim, you were born for the encouragement of the hemp manufacture, and you'll die promoting it."

In the meantime, the master puts his head out of the door, his body stooped to a "half bend"—a phrase, and the exact curve which it forms, I leave for the present to your own

sagacity—and surveys you until you pass. That is an Irish Hedge School, and the personage who follows you with his eye, a Hedge Schoolmaster. His name is Matthew Kavanagh: and as you seem to consider his literary establishment rather a curiosity in its kind, I will, if you be disposed to hear it, give you the history of him and his establishment, beginning in the first place, with

THE ABDUCTION OF MAT KAVANAGH

THE HEDGE SCHOOLMASTER

For about three years before the period of which I write, the village of Findramore, and the parish in which it lay, were without a teacher. Mat's predecessor was a James Garraghty, a lame young man, the son of a widow, whose husband lost his life in attempting to extinguish a fire that broke out in the dwelling-house of Squire Johnston, a neighbouring magistrate. The son was a boy at the time of this disaster, and the squire, as some compensation for the loss of his father's life in his service, had him educated at his own expense; that is to say, he gave the master who taught in the village orders to educate him gratuitously, on the condition of being horse-whipped out of the parish if he refused. As soon as he considered himself qualified to teach, he opened a school in the village on his own account,

where he taught until his death, which happened in less than a year after the commencement of his little seminary. The children usually assembled in his mother's cabin; but as she did not long survive the son, this, which was at best a very miserable residence, soon tottered to the ground. The roof and thatch were burnt for firing, the mud gables fell in, and were overgrown with grass, nettles, and docks; and nothing remained but a foot or two of the little clay side-walls, which presented, when associated with the calamitous fate of their inoffensive inmates, rather a touching image of ruin upon a small scale.

Garraghty had been attentive to his little pupils, and his instructions were sufficient to give them a relish for education—a circumstance which did not escape the observation of their parents, who duly appreciated it. His death, however, deprived them of this advantage; and as schoolmasters, under the old system, were always at a premium, it so happened that, for three years afterwards, not one of that class presented himself to their acceptance. Many a trial had been made, and many a sly offer held out, as a lure to the neighbouring teachers, but they did not take; for although the country was densely inhabited, yet it was remarked that no schoolmaster ever "*thrue*" in the neighbourhood of Findramore. The place, in fact, had got a bad name. Garraghty died, it was thought, of poverty, a disease to which the Findramore schoolmasters had been always known to be subject. His predecessor, too,

was hanged along with two others, for burning the house of an "Anglicot".

Then the Ballymore boys were not easily dealt with, having an ugly habit of burning their unlucky creditors in those quarrels which they kept up with the Ballymacan boys, a fighting clan that lived at the foot of the mountains above them. These two factions, when they met, whether at fair or market, wake or wedding, could never part without carrying home on each side a dozen or two of bloody noddles. For these reasons, the parish of Anghindrum had for a few years been afflicted with an extraordinary dearth of knowledge; the only literary establishment which flourished in it being a parochial institution, which, however excellent in design, yet like too many establishments of the same nature, dispensed less a source of knowledge, morals and education, secondarily, than it dispensed to every person except the master, who was enabled by his honest industry to make a provision for his family, and wealthy enough, then, to purchase the moderate manors of half a barony, like a gentleman. It was, in fact, the only school, to which humanity repaired even those of going for nothing.

Still a state of ignorance, however, could not last long. The youth of Anghindrum were grieved for want of the dew of knowledge, and their parents and prime leaders met on a Saturday night up in Barry Brady's mountain house, to take into serious consideration the best ways for procuring a supply of knowledge for the village and neighbourhood. It was a

difficult point, and required great dexterity of management to enable them to devise any effectual remedy for the evil which they felt. There were present, at this council, Tim Dolan, the senior of the village, and his three sons, Jem Coogan, Brian Murphy, Paddy Delany, Owen Roe O'Neil, Jack Traynor, and Andy Connell, with five or six others, whom it is not necessary to enumerate.

"Bring us in a quart, Barny," said Dolan to Brady, whom on this occasion we must designate as the host; "and let it be rale hathen."

"What do you mane, Tim?" replied the host.

"I mane," continued Dolan, "stuff that was never christened, man alive."

"Thin I'll bring you the same that Father Maguire got last night on his way home, afther anointin' ould Katty Duffy," replied Brady. "I'm sure, whatever I might be afther givin' to strangers, Tim, I'd be long sorry to give *yous* anything but the right sort."

"That's a gay man, Barny," said Traynor, "but off wid you like a shot, and let us get it under our tooth first, an' then we'll tell you more about it.—A big rogue is the same Barny," he added, after Brady had gone to bring in the poteen, "an' never sells a dhrop that's not one whisky and five wathers."

"But he couldn't expose it on *you*, Jack," observed Connell; "you're too ould a hand about the *pot* for that. Warn't you in the mountains last week?"

"Ay: but the curse of Cromwell upon the thief of a gauger, Simpson—himself and a pack

o' redcoats surrounded us when we war beginnin' to *double*, and the purtiest *runnin'* that ever you seen was lost; for you see, before you could cross yourself, we had the bottoms knocked clane out of the vessels; so that the villains didn't get a hole in our coats, as they thought they would."

"I tell you," observed O'Neil, "there's a *bad pill* somewhere about us."

"Ay, is there, Owen," replied Traynor; "and what is more, I don't think he's a hundhre miles from the place where we're sittin' in."

"Faith, maybe so, Jack," returned the other.

"I'd never give in to that," said Murphy. "'Tis Barny Brady that would never turn informer—the same thing isn't in him, nor in any of his breed; there's not a man in the parish I'd thrust sooner."

"I'd jist thrust him," replied Traynor, "as far as I could throw a cow by the tail. Arrah, what's the rason that the gauger never looks next or near *his* place, an' it's well known that he sells poteen widout a license, though he goes past his door wanst a week?"

"What the h—— is keepin' him at all?" enquired one of Dolan's sons.

"Look at him," said Traynor, "comin' in out of the garden; how much afeard he is! keepin' the whisky in a phatie ridge—an' I'd kiss the book that he brought that bottle out in his pocket, instead of diggin' it up out o' the garden."

Whatever Brady's usual habits of *christening*

his poteen might have been, that which he now placed before them was good. He laid the bottle on a little deal table with cross legs, and along with it a small drinking-glass fixed in a bit of flat circular wood, as a substitute for the original bottom, which had been broken. They now entered upon the point in question, without further delay.

"Come, Tim," said Coogan, "you're the ouldest man, and must spake first."

"Throth, man," replied Dolan, "beggin' your pardon, I'll dhrink first—healths apiece, your sowl; success, boys—glory to ourselves, and confusion to the Scanlan boys, any way."

"And maybe," observed Connell, "'tis we that didn't lick them well in the last fair—they're not able to meet the Findramore birds even on their own walk."

"Well, boys," said Delany, "about the masther? Our childher will grow up like *bullockeens* widout knowing a hap'orth; and larning, you see, is a burdyen that's asy carried."

"Ay," observed O'Neil, "as Solvester Maguire, the poet, used to say:

> 'Labour for larnin' before you grow ould,
> For larnin' is better nor riches or gould;
> Riches an' gould they may vanquish away,
> But larnin' alone it will never decay.'"

"Success, Owen! Why, you might put down the pot and warm an air to it," said Murphy.

"Well, boys, are we all safe?" asked Traynor.

"Safe!" said old Dolan: "Arrah, what are you talkin' about? Sure 'tisn't of that same spalpeen of a gauger that we'd be afraid!"

During this observation, young Dolan pressed Traynor's foot under the table, and they both went out for about five minutes.

"Father," said the son, when he and Traynor re-entered the room, "you're a-wanting home."

"Who wants me, Larry, avick?" says the father.

The son immediately whispered him for a moment, when the old man instantly rose, got his hat, and after drinking another bumper of the poteen, departed.

"'Twas hardly worth while," said Delany; "the ould fellow is mettle to the back-bone, an' would never show the *garran-bane* at any rate, even if he knew all about it."

"Bad end to the syllable I'd let the same ould cock hear," said the son; "the divil thrust any man that didn't *switch the primer* for it, though he *is* my father; but now, boys, that the coast's clear, and all's safe—where will we get a schoolmaster? Mat Kavanagh won't budge from the Scanlan boys, even if we war to put our hands undher his feet: and small blame to him—sure, you would not expect him to go against his own friends?"

"Faith, the gorsoons is in a bad state," said Murphy; "but, boys, where will we get a man that's *up*? Why, I know 'tis betther to have anybody nor be without one; but we might

kill two birds wid one stone—if we could get a masther that would carry 'Articles', an' swear in the boys, from time to time—an' between ourselves, if there's any danger of the hemp, we may as well lay it upon strange shoulders."

"Ay, but since Corrigan swung for the Aagint," replied Delany, "they're a little modest in havin' act or part wid us; but the best plan is to get an advartisement wrote out, an' have it posted on the chapel door."

This hint was debated with much earnestness; but as they were really anxious to have a master—in the first place, for the simple purpose of educating their children; and in the next, for filling the situation of director and regulator of their illegal Ribbon meetings—they determined on penning an advertisement, according to the suggestion of Delany. After drinking another bottle, and amusing themselves with some further chat, one of the Dolans undertook to draw up the advertisement, which ran as follows:—

"ADVARTAAISEMENT

"NOTES TO SCHOOLMASTHERS, AND TO ALL OTHERS WHOM IT MAY CONSARN

"WANTED,

"For the nabourhood and the vircinity of the Townland of Findramore, in the Parish of Aughindrum, in the Barony of Lisnamoghry, County of Sligo, Province of Connaught, Ireland.

"TO SCHOOLMASTERS

"Take Notes—That any Schoolmaster who understands Spellin' gramatically—Readin' and Writin', in the raal way, accordin' to the Dixonary—Arithmatick, that is to say, the five common rules, namely, addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division—and addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, of Dives's denominations. Also reduction up and down—cross multiplication of coin—the Rule of Three Direck—the Rule of Three in verse—the double Rule of Three—Frackshins taught according to the vulgar and decimatin' method; and must be well practised to tache the Findramore boys how to manage the *Scuffle*.

"N.B. He must be well grounded in *that*. Practis, Discount, and *Rebatin'*. N.B. Must be well grounded in *that* also.

"Tret and Tare—Fellowship—Allegation—Barther—Rates per Scent—Intherest—Exchange—Prophet in Loss—the Square Root—the Kibe Root—Hippothenuse—Arithmatical and Jommetrical Purgation—Compound Intherest—Loggerheadism—Questions for Exercise, and the Conendix to Algibbra. He must also know Jommithry accordin' to Grunther's scale—the Castigation of the Klipsticks—Surveying, and the use of the Jacob-staff.

"N.B. Would get a good dale of Surveyin' to do in the vircinity of Findramore, particularly in *Cen-acre time*. If he know the use of the globe, it would be an accusation. He must

also understand the Three Sets of Book-keeping, by single and double entry, particularly Loftus & Company of Paris, their Account of Cash and Company. And above all things, he must know how to tache the *Sarvin' of Mass in Latin*, and be able to read Doctor Gallaher's Irish Sarmints, and explain Kolumkill's and Pasterini's Prophecies.

"N.B. If he understands *Cudgel-fencin'*, it would be an accusation also—but mustn't tache us wid a staff that bends in the middle, bekase it breaks one's head across the guard. Any schoolmaster capacious and collified to instruct in the above-mintioned branches, would get a good school in the townland Findramore and its vircinity, be well fed, an' get the hoith o' good livin' among the farmers, an' would be ped—

"For Book-keepin', the three sets, *a ginny and half*.

"For Gommethry, &c., *half a ginny a quarther*.

"Arithmatic, *aight and three-hapuns*.

"Readin', Writin', &c., *six Hogs*.

"*Given under our hands, this 37th day of June*, 18004.

"LARRY DOLAN,
"DICK DOLAN, his × mark.
"JEM COOGAN, his × mark.
"BRINE MURPHEY,
"PADDY DELANY, his × mark.
"JACK TRAYNOR,
"ANDY CONNELL,
"OWEN ROE O'NEIL, his × mark.

"N.B. *By making airly application to any of the undher-mintioned, he will heer of further particklers*; and if they find that he will shoot them, he may expect the best o' thratement, an' be well fed among the farmers.

"N.B. Would get also a good *Night-school* among the vircinity."

Having penned the above advertisement, it was carefully posted early the next morning on the chapel doors, with an expectation on the part of the patrons that it would not be wholly fruitless. The next week, however, passed without an application—the second also—and the third produced the same result; nor was there the slightest prospect of a schoolmaster being blown by any wind to the lovers of learning at Findramore. In the meantime, the Ballyscanlan boys took care to keep up the ill-natured prejudice which had been circulated concerning the fatality that uniformly attended such schoolmasters as settled there; and when this came to the ears of the Findramore folk, it was once more resolved that the advertisement should be again put up, with a clause containing an explanation on that point. The clause ran as follows:—

"N.B. The two last masthers that was hanged out of Findramore, that is, Mickey Corrigan, who was hanged for killing the Aagent, and Jem Garraghty, that died of a declension—Jem died in quensequence of ill-health, and Mickey was hanged contrary to his own wishes: so that it wasn't either of

their faults—as witness our hands this 207th of July.

"DICK DOLAN, his × mark."

This explanation, however, was as fruitless as the original advertisement; and week after week passed over without an offer from a single candidate. The "vircinity" of Findramore and its "nabourhood" seemed devoted to ignorance; and nothing remained, except another effort at procuring a master by some more ingenious contrivance.

Debate after debate was consequently held in Barney Brady's; and, until a fresh suggestion was made by Delany, the prospect seemed as bad as ever. Delany, at length, fell upon a new plan; and it must be confessed that it was marked in a peculiar manner by a spirit of great originality and enterprise, it being nothing less than a proposal to carry off, by force or stratagem, Mat Kavanagh, who was at that time fixed in the throne of literature among the Ballyscanlan boys, quite unconscious of the honourable translation to the neighbourhood of Findramore which was intended for him. The project, when broached, was certainly a startling one, and drove most of them to a pause, before they were sufficiently collected to give an opinion on its merits.

"Nothin', boys, is asier," said Delany. "There's to be a patthern in Ballymagowan, on next Sathurday an' that's jist half-way betune ourselves and the 'Scanlan boys. Let us musther, an' go there, anyhow. We can

to cut the knot of the cravat by which he was held. The others, however, interfered, and prevented further mischief.

"Brady," said Traynor, "you'll rue this night, if ever a man did, you treacherous informin' villain. What an honest spy we have among us!—and a short coorse to you!"

"O, hould yer tongue, Traynor!" replied Brady: "I believe it's best known who is both the spy and the informer. The divil a pint of poteen ever you'll run in this parish, until you clear yourself of bringing the gauger on the Traceys, bekase they tuck Mick M'Kew, in preference to yourself, to run it for them."

Traynor made another attempt to strike him, but was prevented. The rest now interfered; and, in the course of an hour or so, an adjustment took place.

Brady took up the tongs, and swore "by that blessed iron" that he neither heard, nor intended to hear, anything they said; and this exculpation was followed by a fresh bottle at his own expense.

"You omadhawn," said he to Traynor, "I was only puttin' up a dozen o' bottles into the tatch of the house, when you thought I was listenin';" and, as a proof of the truth of this, he brought them out, and showed them some bottles of poteen, neatly covered up under the thatch.

Before their separation they finally planned the abduction of Kavanagh from the Patron, on the Saturday following, and after drinking another round went home to their respective dwellings.

In this speculation, however, they experienced a fresh disappointment; for, ere Saturday arrived, whether in consequence of secret intimation of their intention from Brady, or some friend, or in compliance with the offer of a better situation, the fact was, that Mat Kavanagh had removed to another school, distant about eighteen miles from Findramore. But they were not to be outdone; a new plan was laid, and in the course of the next week a dozen of the most enterprising and intrepid of the "boys", mounted each upon a good horse, went to Mat's new residence for the express purpose of securing him.

Perhaps our readers may scarcely believe that a love of learning was so strong among the inhabitants of Findramore as to occasion their taking such remarkable steps for establishing a schoolmaster among them; but the country was densely inhabited, the rising population exceedingly numerous, and the outcry for a schoolmaster amongst the parents of the children loud and importunate.

The fact, therefore, was, that a very strong motive stimulated the inhabitants of Findramore in their efforts to procure a master. The old and middle-aged heads of families were actuated by a simple wish, inseparable from Irishmen, to have their children educated; and the young men, by a determination to have a properly qualified person to conduct their Night Schools, and improve them in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The circumstance I am now relating is one which actually took

place: and any man acquainted with the remote parts of Ireland may have often seen bloody and obstinate quarrels among the peasantry, in vindicating a priority of claim to the local residence of a schoolmaster among them. I could, within my own experience, relate two or three instances of this nature.

It was one Saturday night, in the latter end of the month of May, that a dozen Findramore "boys", as they were called, set out upon this most singular of all literary speculations, resolved, at whatever risk, to secure the person and effect the permanent bodily presence among them of the Redoubtable Mat Kavanagh. Each man was mounted on a horse, and one of them brought a spare steed for the accommodation of the schoolmaster. The caparison of this horse was somewhat remarkable: it consisted of a wooden straddle, such as is used by the peasantry for carrying wicker panniers or creels, which are hung upon two wooden pins, that stand up out of its sides. Underneath was a straw mat, to prevent the horse's back from being stripped by it. On one side of this hung a large creel, and on the other a strong sack, tied round a stone merely of sufficient weight to balance the empty creel. The night was warm and clear, the moon and stars all threw their mellow light from a serene, unclouded sky, and the repose of nature in the short nights of this delightful season resembles that of a young virgin of sixteen—still, light, and glowing. Their way, for the most part of their journey, lay through a solitary mountain-

road; and, as they did not undertake the enterprise without a good stock of poteen, their light-hearted songs and choruses awoke the echoes that slept in the mountain glens as they went along. The adventure, it is true, had as much of frolic as of seriousness in it; and merely as the means of a day's fun for the boys, it was the more eagerly entered into.

It was about midnight when they left home, and as they did not wish to arrive at the village to which they were bound until the morning should be rather advanced, the journey was as slowly performed as possible. Every remarkable object on the way was noticed, and its history, if any particular association was connected with it, minutely detailed, whenever it happened to be known. When the sun rose, many beautiful green spots and hawthorn valleys excited, even from these unpolished and illiterate peasants, warm bursts of admiration at their fragrance and beauty. In some places the dark flowery heath clothed the mountains to the tops, from which the gray mists, lit by a flood of light, and breaking into masses before the morning breeze, began to descend into the valleys beneath them; whilst the voice of the grouse, the bleating of sheep and lambs, the pee-weet of the wheeling lapwing, and the song of the lark, threw life and animation over the previous stillness of the country. Sometimes a shallow river would cross the road, winding off into a valley that was overhung on one side by rugged precipices clothed with luxuriant heath and wild ash, whilst on the

other it was skirted by a long sweep of green-sward, skimmed by the twittering swallow, over which lay scattered numbers of sheep, cows, brood mares, and colts—many of them rising and stretching themselves, ere they resumed their pasture, leaving the spots on which they lay of a deeper green. Occasionally, too, a sly-looking fox might be seen lurking about a solitary lamb, or brushing over the hills with a fat goose upon his back, retreating to his den among the inaccessible rocks, after having plundered some unsuspecting farmer.

As they advanced into the skirts of the cultivated country, they met many other beautiful spots of scenery among the upland, considerable portions of which, particularly in long, sloping valleys that faced the morning sun, were covered with hazel and brushwood, where the unceasing and simple notes of the cuckoo were incessantly plied, mingled with the more mellow and varied notes of the thrush and blackbird. Sometimes the bright summer waterfall seemed, in the rays of the sun, like a column of light, and the springs that issued from the sides of the more distant and lofty mountains shone with a steady, dazzling brightness, on which the eye could scarcely rest. The morning, indeed, was beautiful, the fields in bloom, and everything cheerful. As the sun rose in the heavens, nature began gradually to awaken into life and happiness; nor was the natural grandeur of a Sabbath summer morning among these piles of magnificent mountains,

nor its heartfelt, but more artificial beauty in the cultivated country, lost, even upon the unphilosophical "boys" of Findramore: so true is it that such exquisite appearances of nature will force enjoyment upon the most uncultivated heart.

When they had arrived within two miles of the little town in which Mat Kavanagh was fixed, they turned off into a deep glen, a little to the left; and, after having seated themselves under a white-thorn which grew on the banks of a rivulet, they began to devise the best immediate measures to be taken.

"Boys," said Tim Dolan, "how will we manage now with this thief of a schoolmaster, at all? Come, Jack Traynor, you that's up to still-house work—escapin' and carryin' away stills from gaugers, the bloody villains! out wid yer *spake*, till we hear your opinion."

"Do ye think, boys," said Andy Connell, "that we could flatter him to come by fair manes?"

"Flatther him!" said Traynor; "and, by my sowl, if we flatther him at all, it must be by the hair of the head. No, no; let us bring him first whether he will or not, an' ax his consent aftherwards!"

"I'll tell you what it is, boys," continued Connell, "I'll hould a wager, if you lave him to me, I'll bring him wid his own consint."

"No, nor sorra that you'll do, nor could do," replied Traynor; "for, along wid everything else, he thinks he's not jist doated on by the Findramore people, being one of the Bally-

scanlan tribe.—No, no; let two of us go to his place, and purtind that we have other business in the fair of Clansallagh on Monday next, and ax him in to dhrink, for he'll not refuse that, anyhow; then, when he's half-tipsy, ax him to convoy us this far; we'll then meet you here, an' tell him some palaver or other—sit down again where we are now, and, afther making him dead dhrunk, hoise a big stone in the creel, and Mat in the sack, on the other side, wid his head out, and off wid him; and he will know neither act nor part about it till we're at Findramore."

Having approved of this project, they pulled out each a substantial complement of stout oaten bread, which served, along with the whisky, for breakfast. The two persons pitched on for decoying Mat were Dolan and Traynor, who accordingly set out, full of glee at the singularity and drollness of their undertaking. It is unnecessary to detail the ingenuity with which they went about it, because, in consequence of Kavanagh's love of drink, very little ingenuity was necessary. One circumstance, however, came to light which gave them much encouragement, and that was a discovery that Mat by no means relished his situation.

In the meantime, those who stayed behind in the glen felt their patience begin to flag a little, because of the delay made by the others, who had promised, if possible, to have the schoolmaster in the glen before two o'clock. But the fact was that Mat, who was far less

deficient in hospitality than in learning, brought them into his house, and not only treated them to plenty of whisky, but made the wife prepare a dinner, for which he detained them, swearing that except they stopped to partake of it, he would not convoy them to the place appointed. Evening was, therefore, tolerably far advanced, when they made their appearance at the glen, in a very equivocal state of sobriety—Mat being by far the steadiest of the three, but still considerably the worse for what he had taken. He was now welcomed by a general huzza; and on his expressing surprise at their appearance, they pointed to their horses, telling him that they were bound for the fair of Clansallagh, for the purpose of selling them. This was the more probable, as, when a fair occurs in Ireland, it is usual for cattle-dealers, particularly horse-jockeys, to effect sales, and "show" their horses on the evening before.

Mat now sat down, and was vigorously plied with strong poteen—songs were sung, stories told, and every device resorted to that was calculated to draw out and heighten his sense of enjoyment. Nor were their efforts without success; for, in the course of a short time, Mat was free from all earthly care, being incapable of either speaking or standing.

"Now, boys," said Dolan, "let us do the thing clane an' dacent. Let you, Jem Coogan, Brian Murphy, Paddy Delany, and Andy Connell go back, and tell the wife and two childher a cock-and-a-bull story about Mat—say that he

is coming to Findramore for good and all, and that'll be thruth, you know; and that he ordhered yez to bring her and them afther him; and we can come back for the furniture to-morrow."

A word was enough—they immediately set off; and the others, not wishing that Mat's wife should witness the mode of his conveyance, proceeded home, for it was now dusk. The plan succeeded admirably, and in a short time the wife and children, mounted behind the "boys" on the horses, were on their way after them to Findramore.

The reader is already aware of the plan they had adopted for translating Mat: but, as it was extremely original, I will explain it somewhat more fully. The moment the schoolmaster was intoxicated to the necessary point—that is is to say, totally helpless and insensible—they opened the sack and put him in, heels foremost, tying it in such a way about his neck as might prevent his head from getting into it: thus avoiding the danger of suffocation. The sack, with Mat at full length in it, was then fixed to the pin of the straddle, so that he was in an erect posture during the whole journey. A creel was then hung at the other side, in which was placed a large stone, of sufficient weight to preserve an equilibrium; and, to prevent any accident, a droll fellow sat astride behind the straddle, amusing himself and the rest by breaking jokes upon the novelty of Mat's situation.

"Well, Mat, *ma bouchal*, how dur ye like your

sitivation? I believe, for all your larnin', the Findramore boys have *sacked* you at last!"

"Ay," exclaimed another, "he *is* sacked at last, in spite of his Matthew-maticks."

"An', be my sowks," observed Traynor, "he'd be a long time goin' up a Maypowl in the state he's in—his own snail would bate him."

"Yes," said another; "but he desarves credit for travellin' from Clansallagh to Findramore widout layin' a foot to the ground—

"'Wan day wid Captain Whisky I wrastled a fall,
But faith I was no match for the captain at all—
But faith I was no match for the captain at all,
Though the landlady's measures they were damnable small.
Tooral, looral, looral looral lido.'

Whoo—hurroo! my darlings—success to the Findramore boys! Hurroo—hurroo—the Findramore boys for ever!"

"Boys, did ever ye hear the song Mat made on Ned Mullen's fight wid Jemmy Connor's gander? Well, here is part of it, to the tune of 'Brian O'Lynn'—

"'As Ned and the gander wor basting each other,
I hard a loud cry from the gray goose his mother;
I ran to assist him, wid very great speed,
But before I arrived the poor gander did bleed.

"'"Alas!' says the gander, 'I'm very ill-trated,
For traicherous Mullen has me fairly defated;
But had you been here for to show me fair play,
I could leather his *puckan* around the lee bray.'"'

"Bravo, Mat!" addressing the insensible schoolmaster—"success, poet! Hurroo for the Findramore boys! the Bridge boys for ever!"

They then commenced, in a tone of mock gravity, to lecture him upon his future duties—detailing the advantages of his situation, and the comforts he would enjoy among them,—although they might as well have addressed themselves to the stone on the other side. In this manner they got along, amusing themselves at Mat's expense, and highly elated at the success of their undertaking. About three o'clock in the morning they reached the top of the little hill above the village, when, on looking back along the level stretch of road which I have already described, they noticed their companions, with Mat's wife and children, moving briskly after them. A general huzza now took place, which, in a few minutes, was answered by two or three dozen of the young folks, who were assembled in Barny Brady's, waiting for their arrival. The scene now became quite animated—cheer after cheer succeeded—jokes, laughter, and rustic wit, pointed by the spirit of Brady's poteen, flew briskly about. When Mat was unsacked, several of them came up, and, shaking him cordially by the hand, welcomed him among them. To the kindness of this reception, however, Mat was wholly insensible, having been for the greater part of the journey in a profound sleep. The boys now slipped the loop of the sack off the straddle-pin; and, carrying Mat into a farmer's house, they deposited him in a settle-bed, where he slept,

unconscious of the journey he had performed, until breakfast-time on the next morning. In the meantime, the wife and children were taken care of by Mrs. Connell, who provided them with a bed and every other comfort which they could require.

The next morning, when Mat awoke, his first call was for a drink. I should have here observed that Mrs. Kavanagh had been sent for by the good woman in whose house Mat had slept, that they might all breakfast and have a drop together, for they had already succeeded in reconciling *her* to the change.

"Wather!" said Mat—"a drink of wather, if it's to be had for love or money, or I'll split wid druth—I'm all in a state of conflagration; and my head—by the sowl of Newton, the inventor of fluxions, but my head is a complete illucidation of the centrifugal motion, so it is. Tundher-an'-turf! is there no wather to be had! Nancy, I say, for God's sake, quicken yourself wid the hydraulics, or the best mathematician in Ireland's gone to the abode of Euclid and Pythagoras, that first invented the multiplication table."

On cooling his burning blood with the "hydraulics", he again lay down with the intention of composing himself for another sleep; but his eye having noticed the novelty of his situation, he once more called Nancy.

"Nancy, avourneen," he enquired, "will you be afther resolving me one single proposition—Where am I at the present spaking? Is it in the *Siminary* at home, Nancy?"

Nancy, in the meantime, had been desired to answer in the affirmative, hoping that if his mind was made easy on that point, he might refresh himself by another hour or two's sleep, as he appeared to be not at all free from the effects of his previous intoxication.

"Why, Mat, jewel, where else would you be, a lannah, but at home? Sure, isn't here Jack, and Biddy, and myself, Mat, agra, along wid me. Your head isn't well, but all you want is a good rousin' sleep."

"Very well, Nancy; very well, that's enough—quite satisfacthory—*quod erat demonstrandum.* May all kinds of bad luck rest upon the Findramore boys, anyway! The unlucky vagabonds—I'm the *third* they've done up. Nancy, off wid ye, like quicksilver, for the priest."

"The priest! Why, Mat, jewel, what puts that in your head? Sure, there's nothing wrong wid ye, only the sup o' drink you tuck yesther-day."

"Go, woman," said Mat; "did you ever know me to make a wrong *calculation*? I tell you I'm *non compos mentis* from head to heel. Head! by my sowl, Nancy, it'll soon be a *caput mortuum* wid me—I'm far gone in a disease they call an opthical delusion—the devil a thing less it is—me bein' in my own place, an' to think I'm lyin' in a settle bed; that there is a large dresser, covered wid pewter dishes and plates; and, to crown all, the door on the wrong side of the house. Off wid ye, an' tell his reverence that I want to be annointed, an to die in pace and charity wid all

men. May the most especial kind of bad luck light down upon you, Findramore, and all that's in you, both man and baste—you have given *me* my gruel along wid the rest; but, thank God, you won't hang me, anyhow! Off, Nancy, for the priest, till I die like a Christhan, in pace and forgiveness wid the world;—all kinds of hard fortune to them! Make haste, woman, if you expect me to die like a Christhan. If they had let me alone till I'd publish to the world my Treatise upon Conic Sections—but to be cut off on my march to fame! another draught of the hydraulics, Nancy, an' then for the priest—But see, bring Father Connell, the curate, for he understands something about Matthew-maticks; an' never heed Father Roger, for divil a thing he knows about them, not even the difference between a right line and a curve—in the page of histhory, to his everlasting disgrace, be the same recorded!"

"Mat," replied Nancy, scarcely preserving her gravity, "keep yourself from talkin', an' fall asleep, then you'll be well enough."

"Is there e'er a sup at all in the house?" said Mat; "if there is, let me get it; for there's an ould proverb, though it's a most unmathematical axiom as ever was invinted—'try a hair of the same dog that bit you'; give me a glass, Nancy, an' you can go for Father Connell afther. Oh, by the sowl of Isaac, that invented fluxions, what's this for?"

A general burst of laughter followed this demand and ejaculation; and Mat sat up once more in the settle, and examined the place

ward, many others had been engaged all the morning cutting rushes; and the scraws were no sooner laid on than half a dozen thatchers mounted the roof, and long before the evening was closed, a school-house, capable of holding near two hundred children, was finished. But among the peasantry no new house is ever put up without a hearth-warming, and a dance. Accordingly the clay floor was pared—a fiddler procured—Barny Brady and his stock of poteen sent for; the young women of the village and surrounding neighbourhood attended in their best finery; dancing commenced—and it was four o'clock the next morning when the merry-makers departed, leaving Mat a new home and a hard floor, ready for the reception of his scholars.

Business now commenced. At nine o'clock the next day Mat's furniture was settled in a small cabin, given to him at a cheap rate by one of the neighbouring farmers; for, whilst the school-house was being built, two men, with horses and cars, had gone to Clansallagh, accompanied by Nancy, and removed the furniture, such as it was, to their new residence. Nor was Mat, upon the whole, displeased at what had happened; he was now fixed in a flourishing country—fertile and well cultivated; nay, the bright landscape which his school-house commanded was sufficient in itself to reconcile him to his situation. The inhabitants were in comparatively good circumstances; many of them wealthy, respectable farmers, and capable of remunerating him very decently for his

literary labours; and what was equally flattering, there was a certainty of his having a numerous and well-attended school, in a neighbourhood with whose inhabitants he was acquainted.

Honest, kind-hearted Paddy!—pity that you should ever feel distress or hunger!—pity that you should be compelled to seek, in another land, the hard-earned pittance by which you keep the humble cabin over the head of your chaste wife and naked children! Alas! what noble materials for composing a national character of which humanity might be justly proud do the lower orders of the Irish possess, if raised and cultivated by an enlightened education! Pardon me, gentle reader, for this momentary ebullition; I grant I am a little dark now. I assure you, however, the tear of enthusiastic admiration is warm on my eyelids, when I remember the flitches of bacon, the sacks of potatoes, the bags of meal, the *miscawns* of butter, and the dishes of eggs—not omitting crate after crate of turf, which came in such rapid succession to Mat Kavanagh during the first week on which he opened his school. Ay, and many a bottle of stout poteen, when

"The eye of the gauger saw it not",

was, with a sly, good-humoured wink, handed over to Mat, or Nancy, no matter which, from under the comfortable drab jock, with velvet-covered collar, erect about the honest, ruddy face of a warm, smiling farmer; or even the tattered

CARLETON'S STORIES

in the most profound obscurity, as no man but a walking Encyclopædia—an Admirable Crichton—could claim an intimacy with them, embracing, as they often did, the whole circle of human knowledge. 'Tis true, the vanity of the pedagogue had full scope in these advertisements, as there were none to bring him to an account, except some rival, who could only attack him on those practical subjects which were known to both. Independently of this, there was a good-natured collusion between them on those points which were beyond their knowledge, inasmuch as they were not practical but speculative, and by no means involved their character or personal interests. On the next Sunday, therefore, after Mat's establishment at Findramore, you might see a circle of the peasantry assembled at the chapel door, perusing, with suitable reverence and admiration on their faces, the following advertisement; or, perhaps, Mat himself, with a learned, consequential air, in the act of "expounding" it to them.

"EDUCATION

"*Mr. Matthew Kavanagh, Philomath and Professor of the Learned Languages, begs leave to inform the inhabitants of Findramore and its vicinity that he Lectures on the following Branches of Education, in his Seminary at the above-recited place:—*

"Spelling, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic, upon altogether *new* principles, hitherto un-

Greek; together with various other branches of learning and scholastic profundity—*quos enumerare longum est*—along with Irish radically, and a small taste of Hebrew upon the Masoretic text.

"MATTHEW KAVANAGH, *Philomath.*"

Having posted this document upon the chapel door, and in all the public places and cross-roads of the parish, Mat considered himself as having done his duty. He now began to teach, and his school continued to increase to his heart's content, every day bringing him fresh scholars. In this manner he flourished till the beginning of winter, when those boys who, by the poverty of their parents, had been compelled to go to service to the neighbouring farmers, flocked to him in numbers, quite voracious for knowledge. An addition was consequently built to the school-house, which was considerably too small; so that, as Christmas approached, it would be difficult to find a more numerous or merry establishment under the roof of a hedge school. But it is time to give an account of its interior.

The reader will then be pleased to picture to himself such a house as I have already described—in a line with the hedge; the eave of the back roof within a foot of the ground behind it; a large hole exactly in the middle of the "*riggin*" as a chimney; immediately under which is an excavation in the floor, burned way by a large fire of turf, loosely

together. This is surrounded by a circle of urchins, sitting on the bare earth, stones, and hassocks, and exhibiting a series of speckled shins, all radiating towards the fire, like sausages on a *Poloni* dish. There they are—wedged as close as they can sit; one with half a thigh off his breeches—another with half an arm off his tattered coat—a third without breeches at all, wearing, as a substitute, a piece of his mother's old petticoat, pinned about his loins—a fourth, no coat—a fifth, with a cap on him, because he has got a scald, from having sat under the juice of fresh hung bacon—a sixth with a black eye—a seventh, two rags about his heels to keep his kibes clean—an eighth crying to get home because he has got a headache, though it may be as well to hint that there is a drag-hunt to start from beside his father's in the course of the day. In this ring, with his legs stretched in a most lordly manner, sits, upon a deal chair, Mat himself, with his hat on, basking in the enjoyment of unlimited authority. His dress consists of a black coat, considerably in want of repair, transferred to his shoulders through the means of a clothes-broker in the county-town; a white cravat, round a large stuffing, having that part which comes in contact with the chin somewhat streaked with brown—a black waistcoat, with one or two "tooth-an'-egg" metal buttons sewed on where the original had fallen off—black corduroy inexpressibles, twice-dyed, and sheep's-gray stockings. In his hand is a large, broad ruler, the emblem of his power, the

woeful instrument of executive justice, and the signal of terror to all within his jurisdiction. In a corner below is a pile of turf, where, on entering, every boy throws his two sods, with a *hitch* from under his left arm. He then comes up to the master, catches his forelock with finger and thumb, and bobs down his head by way of making him a bow, and goes to his seat. Along the walls, on the ground, is a series of round stones, some of them capped with a straw collar or hassock, on which the boys sit; others have bosses, and many of them hobs—a light but compact kind of boggy substance found in the mountains. On these several of them sit; the greater number of them, however, have no seats whatever, but squat themselves down, without compunction, on the hard floor. Hung about, on wooden pegs driven into the walls, are the shapeless yellow "*caubeens*" of such as can boast the luxury of a hat, or caps made of goat- or hare-skin, the latter having the ears of the animal rising ludicrously over the temples, or cocked out at the sides, and the scut either before or behind, according to the taste or the humour of the wearer. The floor, which is only swept every Saturday, is strewed over with tops of quills, pens, pieces of broken slate, and tattered leaves of *Reading made Easy*, or fragments of old copies. In one corner is a knot engaged at "Fox and Geese", or the "Walls of Troy" on their slates; in another pair of them are "fighting bottles", which onsists in striking the bottoms together and

he whose bottle breaks first, of course, loses. Behind the master is a third set playing "heads and points"—a game of pins. Some are more industriously employed in writing their copies, which they perform seated on the ground, with their paper on a copy-board—a piece of planed deal, the size of the copy, an appendage now nearly exploded—their cheek-bones laid within half an inch of the left side of the copy, and the eye set to guide the motion of the hand across, and to regulate the straightness of the lines and the forms of the letters. Others, again, of the more grown boys, are working their sums with becoming industry. In a dark corner are a pair of urchins thumping each other, their eyes steadily fixed on the master, lest he might happen to glance in that direction. Near the master himself are the larger boys, from twenty-two to fifteen—shaggy-headed slips, with loose-breasted shirts lying open about their bare chests; ragged colts, with white, dry, bristling beards upon them, that never knew a razor; strong stockings on their legs; heavy brogues, with broad, nail-paved soles; and breeches open at the knees. Nor is the establishment without a competent number of females. These were, for the most part, the daughters of wealthy farmers, who considered it necessary to their respectability that they should not be altogether illiterate; such a circumstance being a considerable drawback, in the opinion of an admirer, from the character of a young woman for whom he was about to propose—a drawback, too, which was

always weighty in proportion to her wealth or respectability.

Having given our readers an imperfect sketch of the interior of Mat's establishment, we will now proceed, however feebly, to represent him at work—with all the machinery of the system in full operation.

"Come, boys, rehearse—(buz, buz, buz)—I'll soon be after calling up the first spelling lesson—(buz, buz, buz)—then the mathematicians—book-keepers—Latinists, and Grecians, successfully. (Buz, buz, buz.) Silence there below!—your pens! Tim Casey, isn't this a purty hour o' the day for you to come into school at; arrah, and what kept you, Tim? Walk up wid yourself here, till we have a confabulation together; you see I love to be talking to you."—

"Sir, Larry Brannagan, here; he's throwing spits at me out of his pen."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"By my sowl, Larry, there's a rod in steep for you."

"Fly away, Jack—fly away Jill; come again, Jack—"

"I had to go to Paddy Nowlan's for tobaccy, sir, for my father" (weeping, with his hand knowingly across his face—one eye laughing at his comrades).—

"You lie, it wasn't."

"If you call me a liar agin, I'll give you a dig in the mug."

"It's not in your jacket."

"Isn't it?"

"Behave yourself; ha! there's the masther looking at you—ye'll get it now."—

"None at all, Tim. And she's not after sinding an excuse wid you? What's that undher your arm?"

"Did she send no message, good or bad, before I lay on?"

"Oh, not a word, sir, only that my father killed a pig yestherday, and he wants you to go up to-day at dinner-time."—(Buz, buz, buz.)—

"It's time to got lave—it isn't, it is—it isn't, it is," &c.

"You lie, I say, your faction never was able to fight ours; didn't we lick all your dirty breed in Buillagh-battha fair?"

"Silence there."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"Will you meet us on Sathurday, and we'll fight it out clane?"—

"Ha-ha-ha! Tim, but you got a big fright, anyhow: whist, *ma bouchal*, sure I was only jokin' you; and sorry I'd be to bate your father's son, Tim. Come over, and sit beside myself at the fire here. Get up, Micky Donoghue, you big burnt-shinn'd spalpeen you, and let the dacent boy sit at the fire."

"Hullabaloo hoo-hoo-hoo—to go to give me such a welt, only for sitting at the fire, and me brought turf wid me."—

"To-day, Tim?"

"Yes, sir."

"At dinner-time, is it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Faith, the dacent strain was always in the same family."—(Buz, buz, buz.)—

"Horns, horns, cock horns: oh, you up'd wid them, you lifted your fingers—that's a mark, now—hould your face, till I blacken you."—

"Do you call thim two sods, Jack Lanigan?

why, 'tis only one long one broke in the middle; but you must make it up to-morrow, Jack; how is your mother's tooth?—did she get it pulled out yet?"

"No, sir."

"Well, tell her to come to me, an' I'll write a charm for it, that'll cure her.—What kept you till now, Paddy Magouran?"

"Couldn't come any sooner, sir."

"You couldn't, sir—and why, sir, couldn't you come any sooner, sir?"—

"See, sir, what Andy Nowlan done to my copy."—(Buz, buz, buz.)—

"Silence! I'll massacree yez, if yez don't make less noise."—(Buz, buz, buz.)

"I was down with Mrs. Kavanagh, sir."

"You were, Paddy—an' Paddy, *ma bouchal*, what war you doing there, Paddy?"—

"Masther, sir, spake to Jem Kenny here; he made my nose bleed."—

"Eh, Paddy?"

"I was bringin' her a layin' hen, sir, that my mother promised her at mass on Sunday last."

"Ah, Paddy, you're a game bird yourself, wid your layin' hens; you're as full o' mischief as an egg's full o' mate—(*omnes*—ha, ha, ha, ha!)—Silence, boys!—what are you laughin' at?—ha, ha, ha!—Paddy, can you spell Nebachodnazure for me?"

"No, sir."

"No, nor a better scholar, Paddy, could not do that, *ma bouchal*; but *I'll* spell it for you. Silence, boys—whist, all of yez, till I spell

Nebachodnazure for Paddy Magouran. Listen; and you yourself, Paddy, are one of the letthers:

"'A turf and a clod spells Nebachod—
A knife and a razure, spells Nebachodnazure—
Three pair of boots and five pair of shoes—
Spells Nebachodnazure, the king of the Jews.'

Now, Paddy, that's spelling Nebachodnazure by the science of Ventilation; but you'll never go that deep, Paddy."—

"I want to go out, if you plase, sir."

"Is that the way you ax me, you vagabone?"

"I want to go out, sir,"—(pulling down the fore-lock).

"Yes, that's something dacenter; by the sowl of Newton, that invinted fluxions, if ever you forget to make a bow again, I'll flog the enthrils out of you—wait till the pass comes in."

Then comes the spelling lesson.

"Come, boys, stand up to the spelling lesson."

"Micky," says one urchin, "show me your book, till I look at *my* word. I'm fifteenth."

"Wait till I see my own."

"Why do you crush for?"

"That's my place."

"No, it's not."

"Sir, spake to——I'll tell the masther."

"What's the matther there?"

"Sir, he won't let me into my place."

"I'm before you."

"No, you're not."

"I say, I am."

"You lie, pug-face: ha! I called you pug-face, tell now if you dare."

"Well, boys, down with your pins in the book: who's king?"

"I am, sir."

"Who's queen?"

"Me, sir."

"Who's prince?"

"I am prince, sir."

"Tag-rag and bob-tail, fall into your places."

"I've no pin, sir."

"Well, down with you to the tail—now, boys."

Having gone through the spelling task, it was Mat's custom to give out six *hard words* selected according to his judgment—as a final test; but he did not always confine himself to that. Sometimes he would put a number of syllables arbitrarily together, forming a most heterogeneous combination of articulate sounds.

"Now, boys, here's a deep word, that'll thry yez; come, Larry, spell *me-mo-man-dran-san-ti-fi-can-du-ban-dan-ti-al-i-ty*, or *mis-an-thro-po-mor-phi-ta-ni-a-nus-mi-ca-li-a-tion*;—that's too hard for you, is it? Well, then, spell phthisic. Oh, that's physic your spellin'. Now, Larry, do you know the difference between physic and phthisic?"

"No, sir."

"Well, I'll expound it: phthisic, you see, manes — whisht, boys; will yez hould yer tongues there — phthisic, Larry, signifies — that is, phthisic — mind, it's not physic I'm

expounding, but phthisic—boys, will yez stop yer noise there—signifies—but, Larry, it's so deep a word in larnin' that I should draw it out on a slate for you: and now I remimber, man alive, you're not far enough on yet to undherstand it: but what's physic, Larry?"

"Isn't that, sir, what my father tuck, the day he got sick, sir?"

"That's the very thing, Larry: it has what larned men call a medical property, and resembles little ricketty Dan Reilly there—it retrogades. Och! och! I'm the boy that knows things—you see now how I expounded them two hard words for yez, boys—don't yez?"

"Yes, sir," &c., &c.

"So, Larry, you haven't the larnin' for that either: but here's an 'asier one—spell me Ephabridotas (Epaphroditas)—you can't! hut! man—you're a big dunce entirely, that little shoneen Sharkey there below would *sack*. God be wid the day when I was the likes of you—it's I that was the bright gorsoon entirely—and so sign was on it, when a great larned traveller—silence, boys, till I tell yez this [a dead silence]—from Thrinity College, all the way in Dublin, happened to meet me one day—seeing the slate and Gough, you see, undher my arm, he axes me—'Arrah, Mat,' says he, 'what are you *in*?' says he. 'Faix, I'm in my breeches, for one thing,' says I offhand—silence, childher, and don't laugh so loud—(ha, ha, ha!) So he looks closer at me: 'I see that,' says he; 'but what are you reading?' 'Nothing, at all

at all,' says I; 'bad manners to the taste, as you may see, if you've your eyesight.' 'I think,' says he, 'you'll be apt to *die* in your breeches;' and set spurs to a fine saddle-mare he rid—faith, he did so—thought me so *cute*—(*omnes*—ha, ha, ha!). Whisht, boys, whisht; isn't it a terrible thing that I can't tell yez a joke, but you split your sides laughing at it—(ha, ha, ha!)—don't laugh so loud Barney Casey."—(ha, ha, ha!)

Barney—"I want to go out, if you plase, sir."

"Go, avick; you'll be a good scholar yet, Barney. Faith, Barney knows whin to laugh, anyhow."

"Well, Larry, you can't spell Ephabridotas?—thin, here's a short weeshy one, and whoever spells it will get the pins;—spell a red rogue wid three letters. You, Micky? Dan? Jack? Natty? Alick? Andy? Pether? Jim? Tim? Pat? Rody? You? you? you? Now, boys, I'll hould ye that my little Andy here, that's only beginning the *Rational Spelling Book*, bates you all. Come here, Andy, alanna: now, boys, if he bates you, you must all bring him a little *miscaun* of butter between two kale blades, in the mornin', for himself; here, Andy avourneen, spell red rogue wid three letthers."

Andy—"M-a-t—Mat."

"No, no, avick, that's myself, Andy; it's red rogue, Andy—hem!—*F*—."

"F-o-x—fox."

"That's a man, Andy. Now, boys, mind what you owe Andy in the mornin', plase God, won't yez?"

"Yes, sir." "Yes, sir." "Yes, sir." "I will, sir." "And I will, sir." "And so will I, sir," &c., &c., &c.

I know not whether the Commissioners of Education found the monitorial system of instruction in such of the old hedge schools as maintained an obstinate resistance to the innovations of modern plans. That Bell and Lancaster deserve much credit for applying and extending the principle (speaking without any reference to its merits) I do not hesitate to grant; but it is unquestionably true that the principle was reduced to practice in Irish hedge schools long before either of these worthy gentlemen were in existence. I do not, indeed, at present remember whether or not they claim it as a discovery, or simply as an adaptation of a practice which experience, in accidental cases, had found useful, and which they considered capable of more extensive benefit. I remember many instances, however, in which it was applied—and applied, in my opinion, though not as a permanent system, yet more judiciously than it is at present. I think it a mistake to suppose that silence, among a number of children in school, is conducive to the improvement either of health or intellect. That the chest and the lungs are benefited by giving full play to the voice, I think will not be disputed; and that a child is capable of more intense study and abstraction in the din of a schoolroom than in partial silence (if I may be permitted the word) is a fact which I think any rational observation

would establish. There is something cheering and cheerful in the noise of friendly voices about us—it is a restraint taken off the mind, and it will run the lighter for it—it produces more excitement, and puts the intellect in a better frame for study. The obligation to silence, though it may give the master more ease, imposes a new moral duty upon the child, the sense of which must necessarily weaken his application. Let the boy speak aloud, if he pleases—that is, to a certain pitch; let his blood circulate; let the natural secretions take place, and the physical effluvia be thrown off by a free exercise of voice and limbs: but do not keep him dumb and motionless as a statue—his blood and his intellect both in a state of stagnation, and his spirit below zero. Do not send him in quest of knowledge alone, but let him have cheerful companionship on his way; for, depend upon it that the man who expects too much either in discipline or morals from a boy, is not, in my opinion, acquainted with human nature. If an urchin titter at his own joke, or that of another—if he give him a jag of a pin under the desk, imagine not that it will do him an injury, whatever phrenologists may say concerning the organ of destructiveness. It is an exercise to the mind, and he will return to his business with greater vigour and effect. Children are not men, nor influenced by the same motives — they do not reflect, because their capacity for reflection is imperfect; so is their reason: whereas, on the contrary, their faculties for education (excepting

judgment, which strengthens my argument) are in greater vigour in youth than in manhood. The general neglect of this distinction is, I am convinced, a stumbling-block in the way of youthful instruction, though it characterizes all our modern systems. We should never forget that they are children; nor should we bind them by a system whose standard is taken from the maturity of human intellect. We may bend our reason to theirs, but we cannot elevate their capacity to our own. We may produce an external appearance, sufficiently satisfactory to ourselves; but, in the meantime, it is probable that the child may be growing in hypocrisy, and settling down into the habitual practice of a fictitious character.

But another and more serious objection may be urged against the present strictness of scholastic discipline—which is, that it deprives the boy of a sense of free and independent agency. I speak this with limitations, for a master should be a monarch in his school, but by no means a tyrant; and decidedly the very worst species of tyranny is that which stretches the young mind upon the bed of too rigorous a discipline—like the despot who exacted from his subjects so many barrels of perspiration whenever there came a long and severe frost. Do not familiarize the mind when young to the toleration of slavery, lest it prove afterwards incapable of recognizing and relishing the principle of an honest and manly independence. I have known many children on whom a rigour of discipline, affecting the mind only (for severe

corporal punishment is now almost exploded), impressed a degree of timidity almost bordering on pusillanimity. Away, then, with the specious and long-winded arguments of a false and mistaken philosophy. A child will be a child, and a boy a boy, to the conclusion of the chapter. Bell or Lancaster would not relish the pap or caudle-cup three times a day; neither would an infant on the breast feel comfortable after a gorge of ox beef. Let them, therefore, put a little of the mother's milk of human kindness and consideration into their strait-laced systems.

A hedge schoolmaster was the general scribe of the parish, to whom all who wanted letters or petitions written uniformly applied—and these were glorious opportunities for the pompous display of pedantry: the remuneration usually consisted of a bottle of whisky.

A poor woman, for instance, informs Mat that she wishes to have a letter written to her son, who is a soldier abroad.

"An' how long is he gone, ma'am?"

"Och, thin, masther, he's from me goin' an fifteen year; an' a comrade of his was spakin' to Jim Dwyer, an' says his ridgiment's lyin' in the Island of Budanages, somewhere in the back parts of Africa."

"An' is it a letther or petition you'd be afther havin' me to indite for you, ma'am?"

"Och, a letther, sir—a letther, masther; an' may the Lord grant you all kinds of luck, good, bad, an' indifferent, both to you an' yours: an' well it's known, by the same token, that it's

yourself has the nice hand at the pen entirely, an' can indite a letther or petition, that the priest o' the parish mightn't be ashamed to own to it."

"Why, thin, 'tis I that 'ud scorn to deteriorate upon the superiminence of my own execution at inditin' wid a pen in my hand: but would you feel a delectability in my superscriptionizin' the epistolary correspondency, ma'am, that I'm about to adopt?"

"Eagh? och, what am I sayin'!—*Sir*—masther—*Sir?*—the noise of the crathurs, you see, is got into my ears; and, besides, I'm a bit bothered on both sides of my head, ever since I had that weary *weid*."

"Silence, boys; bad manners to yez, will ye be asy, you Lilliputian Bœotians—by my s—hem—upon my credit, if I go down to that corner, I'll castigate yez in dozens: I can't spake to this dacent woman, with your insuperable turbulentiality."

"Ah, avourneen, masther, but the larnin's a fine thing, anyhow; an' maybe 'tis yourself that hasn't the tongue in your head, an' can spake the tall, high-flown English; a wurrah, but your tongue hangs well, anyhow—the Lord increase it!"

"Lanty Cassidy, are you gettin' on wid yer Stereometry? *festina, mi discipuli*; *vocabo Homerum, mox atque mox.* You see, ma'am, I must tache thim to spake an' effectuate a translation of the larned languages sometimes."

"Arrah, masther dear, how did you get it all into your head, at all at all?"

"Silence, boys—*tace*—'*conticuere omnes intentique ora tenebant.*' Silence, I say agin."

"You could slip over, maybe, to Doran's, masther, do you see? You'd do it betther there, I'll engage: sure an' you'd want a dhrop to steady your hand, anyhow."

"Now, boys, I am goin' to indite a small taste of literal correspondency over at the public-house here; you *literati* will hear the lessons for me, boys, till afther I'm back agin; but mind, boys, *absente domino, strepuunt servi*—meditate on the philosophy of that; and, Mick Mahon, take your slate and put down all the names; and, upon my sou—hem—credit, I'll castigate any boy guilty of *misty manners* on my retrogradation thither;—*ergo momentote, cave ne titubes mandataque frangas.*"

"Blood alive, masther, but that's great spakin'—begar, a judge couldn't come up to you; but in throth, sir, I'd be long sarry to throuble you; only he's away fifteen year, and I wouldn't thrust it to another; and the corplar that commands the ridgment would regard your hand-write and your inditin'."

"Don't, ma'am, plade the smallest taste of apology."

"Eagh?"

"I'm happy tnat I can sarve you, ma'am."

"Musha, long life to you, masther, for that same, anyhow—but it's yourself that's deep in the larnin' and the langridges; the Lord incrase yer knowledge—sure, an we all want his blessin', you know."

THE RETURN

"Well, boys, ye've been at it — here's swelled faces and bloody noses. What blackened your eye, Callaghan? You're a purty prime ministher, ye boxing blackguard, you: I left you to keep pace among these factions, and you've kicked up a purty dust. What blackened your eye—eh?"

"I'll tell you, sir, whin I come in, if you plase."

"Ho, you vagabones, this is the ould work of the faction between the Bradys and the Callaghans—bastin' one another; but, by my sowl, I'll baste you all through other. You don't want to go out, Callaghan. You had fine work here since; there's a dead silence now; but I'll pay you presently. Here, Duggan, go out wid Callaghan, and see that you bring him back in less than no time. It's not enough for your fathers and brothers to be at it, who have *a right* to fight, but you must battle betune you —have your field days itself!"

(*Duggan returns*) — "Hoo — hoo — sir, my nose. Oh, *murdher sheery*, my nose is broked!"

"Blow your nose, you spalpeen you—where's Callaghan?"

"Oh, sir, bad luck to him every day he rises out of his bed; he got a stone in his fist, too, that he *hot* me a pelt on the nose wid, and then made off home."

"Home, is id? Start, boys, off—chase him, lie into him—asy, curse yez, take time gettin' out: that's it—keep to him—don't wait for

me; take care, you little spalpeens, or you'll brake your bones, so you will: blow the dust off this road, I can't see my way in it!"

"Oh! murdher, Jem, agra, my knee's out o' joint."

"My elbow's smashed, Paddy. Bad luck to him—the devil fly away wid him—oh! ha! ha!—oh! ha! ha!—murdher—hard fortune to me, but little Mickey Geery fell, an' thripped the masther, an' himself's disabled now—his black breeches split too—look at him feelin' them—oh! oh! ha! ha!—by tare-an'-onty, Callaghan will be murdhered, if they cotch him."

This was a specimen of scholastic civilization which Ireland only could furnish; nothing, indeed, could be more perfectly ludicrous than such a chase; and such scenes were by no means uncommon in hedge schools, for, wherever severe punishment was dreaded—and, in truth, most of the hedge masters were unfeeling tyrants—the boy, if sufficiently grown to make a good race, usually broke away, and fled home at the top of his speed. The pack then were usually led on by the master, who mostly headed them himself, all in full cry, exhibiting such a scene as should be witnessed in order to be enjoyed. The neighbours—men, women, and children—ran out to be spectators; the labourers suspended their work to enjoy it, assembling on such eminences as commanded a full view of the pursuit.

"Bravo, boys—success, masther; lie into him—where's your huntin'-horn, Mr.

Kavanagh?—he'll bate yez, if ye don't take the wind of him. Well done, Callaghan, keep up yer heart, yer sowl, and you'll do it asy—you're gaining on them, *ma bouchal*—the masther's down, you gallows clip, an' there's none but the scholars afther ye—he's safe."

"Not he; I'll hould a naggin, the poor scholar has him; don't you see, he's close at his heels?"

"*Done*, by my song—they'll never come up wid him; listen to their leather crackers and cord-a-roys, as their knees bang agin one another. Hark forrit, boys! hark forrit! huzzaw, you thieves, huzzaw!"

"Your beagles is well winded, Mr. Kavanagh, and gives good tongue."

"Well, masther, you had your chase for nothin', I see."

"Mr. Kavanagh," another would observe, "I didn't think you war so stiff in the hams, as to let the gorsoon bate you that way—your wind's failin', sir."

"The schoolmaster was abroad" then, and never was the "march of intellect" at once so rapid and unsuccessful.

During the summer season it was the usual practice for the scholars to transfer their paper, slates, and books, to the green which lay immediately behind the school-house, where they stretched themselves on the grass, and resumed their business. Mat would bring out his chair, and, placing it on the shady side of the hedge, sit with his pipe in his mouth, the contented lord of his little realm, whilst nearly a hundred

and fifty scholars, of all sorts and sizes, lay scattered over the grass, basking under the scorching sun in all the luxury of novelty, nakedness, and freedom. The sight was original and characteristic, and such as Lord Brougham would have been delighted with.—"The schoolmaster was abroad again."

As soon as one o'clock drew near, Mat would pull out his *Ring-dial*, holding it against the sun, and declare the hour.

"Now, boys, to yer dinners, and the rest to play."

"Hurroo, darlins, to play—the masther says it's dinner-time!—whip-spur-an'-away-gray—hurroo—whack—hurroo!"

"Masther, sir, my father bid me ax you home to yer dinner."

"No, he'll come to hur—come wid me if you plase, sir."

"Sir, never heed *them*; my mother, sir, has some of what you know—of the filtch I brought to Shoneen on last Aisther, sir."

This was a subject on which the boys gave themselves great liberty; an invitation, even when not accepted, being an indemnity for the day; it was usually followed by a battle between the claimants, and bloody noses sometimes were the issue. The master himself, after deciding to go where he was certain of getting the best dinner, generally put an end to the quarrels by a reprimand, and then gave notice to the disappointed claimants of the successive days on which he would attend at their respective houses.

"Boys, you all know my maxim; to go, for fear of any jealousies, boys, wherever I get the *worst* dinner; so tell me, now, boys, what yer dacent mothers have all got at home for me."

"My mother killed a fat hen yesterday, sir, an' you'll have a lump of bacon and flat dutch along wid it."

"We'll have hung beef and greens, sir."

"We tried the praties this mornin', sir, an' we'll have new praties, and bread and butther, sir."

"Well, it's all good, boys; but rather than show favour or affection, do you see, I'll go wid Andy, here, and take share of the hen an' bacon; but, boys, for all that, I'm fonder of the other things, you persave; and as I can't go wid you, Mat, tell your respectable mother that I'll be with her to-morrow; and with you, Larry, *ma bouchal*, the day afther."

If a master were a single man, he usually "went round" with the scholars each night; but there were generally a few comfortable farmers, leading men in the parish, at whose house he chiefly resided; and the children of these men were treated with the grossest and most barefaced partiality. They were altogether privileged persons, and had liberty to beat and abuse the other children of the school, who were certain of being most unmercifully flogged if they even dared to prefer a complaint against the favourites. Indeed, the instances of atrocious cruelty in hedge schools were almost incredible, and such as, in the present enlightened time would not be permitted. As

to the state of the "poor scholar", it exceeded belief; for he was friendless and unprotected. But though legal prosecutions in those days were never resorted to, yet, according to the characteristic notions of Irish retributive justice, certain cases occurred in which a signal, and at times a fatal, vengeance was executed on the person of the brutal master. Sometimes the brothers and other relatives of the mutilated child would come in a body to the school, and flog the pedagogue with his own taws until his back was lapped in blood. Sometimes they would beat him until few symptoms of life remained.

Occasionally he would get a nocturnal notice to quit the parish in a given time, under a penalty which seldom proved a dead letter in case of non-compliance. Not unfrequently did those whom he had, when boys, treated with such barbarity, go back to him, when young men, not so much for education's sake as for the especial purpose of retaliating upon him for his former cruelty. When cases of this nature occurred, he found himself a mere cipher in his school, never daring to practise excessive severity in their presence. Instances have come to our own knowledge of masters who, for their mere amusement, would go out to the next hedge, cut a large branch of furze or thorn, and having first carefully arranged the children in a row round the walls of the school, their naked legs stretched out before them, would sweep round the branch, bristling with spikes and prickles, with all his force against

their limbs, until, in a few minutes, a circle of blood was visible on the ground where they sat, their legs appearing as if they had been scarified. This the master did, whenever he happened to be drunk, or in a remarkably good humour. The poor children, however, were obliged to laugh loud, and enjoy it, though the tears were falling down their cheeks in consequence of the pain he inflicted. To knock down a child with the fist was considered nothing harsh; nor, if a boy were cut, or prostrated by a blow of a cudgel on the head, did he ever think of representing the master's cruelty to his parents. Kicking on the shins with the point of a brogue or shoe, bound round the edge of the sole with iron nails, until the bone was laid open, was a common punishment; and as for the usual slapping, horsing, and flogging, they were inflicted with a brutality that in every case richly deserved for the tyrant, not only a peculiar whipping by the hand of the common executioner, but a separation from civilized society by transportation for life. It is a fact, however, that in consequence of the general severity practised in hedge schools, excesses of punishment did not often produce retaliation against the master; these were only exceptions, isolated cases that did not affect the general character of the discipline in such schools.

Now, when we consider the total absence of all moral and religious principles in these establishments, and the positive presence of all that was wicked, cruel, and immoral, need we be

surprised that occasional crimes of a dark and cruel character should be perpetrated? The truth is, that it is difficult to determine whether unlettered ignorance itself were not preferable to the kind of education which the people then received.

I am sorry to perceive the writings of many respectable persons on Irish topics imbued with a tinge of spurious liberality, that frequently occasions them to depart from truth. To draw the Irish character as it *is*, as the model of all that is generous, hospitable, and magnanimous, is in some degree fashionable; but although I am as warm an admirer of all that is really excellent and amiable in my countrymen as any man, yet I cannot, nor will I, extenuate their weak and indefensible points. That they possess the *elements* of a noble and exalted national character, I grant; nay, that they actually do possess such a character, under limitations, I am ready to maintain. Irishmen, setting aside their religious and political prejudices, are grateful, affectionate, honourable, faithful, generous, and even magnanimous; but under the stimulus of religious and political feeling they are treacherous, cruel, and inhuman—will murder, burn, and exterminate, not only without compunction, but with a satanic delight worthy of a savage. Their education, indeed, was truly barbarous; they were trained and habituated to cruelty, revenge, and personal hatred in their schools. Their knowledge was directed to evil purposes—disloyal principles were industriously insinuated into their minds

by their teachers, most of whom were leaders of illegal associations. The matter placed in their hands was of a most inflammatory and pernicious nature as regarded politics: and as far as religion and morality were concerned, nothing could be more gross and superstitious than the books which circulated among them. Eulogiums on murder, robbery, and theft were read with delight in the histories of *Freney the Robber*, and the *Irish Rogues and Rapparees*; ridicule of the Word of God, and hatred to the Protestant religion, in a book called Ward's *Cantos*, written in Hudibrastic verse; the downfall of the Protestant Establishment, and the exaltation of the Romish Church, in Columbkill's *Prophecy*, and latterly in that of Pastorini. Gross superstitions, political and religious ballads of the vilest doggerel, miraculous legends of holy friars persecuted by Protestants, and of signal vengeance inflicted by their divine power on those who persecuted them, were in the mouths of the young and old, and, of course, firmly fixed in their credulity.

Their weapons of controversy were drawn from the *Fifty Reasons*, the *Doleful Fall of Andrew Sall*, the *Catholic Christian*, the *Grounds of the Catholic Doctrine*, *A Net for the Fishers of Men*, and several other publications of the same class. The books of amusement read in these schools, including the first-mentioned in this list, were the *Seven Champions of Christendom*, the *Seven Wise Masters and Mistresses of Rome*, *Don Belianis of Greece*, the *Royal Fairy Tales*, the *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, *Valentine and Orson*, *Gesta*

Romanorum, *Dorastes and Faunia*, the *History of Reynard the Fox*, the *Chevalier Faublax*; to these I may add the *Battle of Aughrim*, *Siege of Londonderry*, *History of the Young Ascanius*, a name by which the Pretender was designated, and the *Renowned History of the Siege of Troy*; the *Forty Thieves*, *Robin Hood's Garland*, the *Garden of Love and Royal Flower of Fidelity*, *Parismus and Parismenos*, along with others the names of which shall not appear on these pages. With this specimen of education before our eyes, is it not extraordinary that the people of Ireland should be, in general, so moral and civilized a people as they are?

"Thady Bradly, will you come up wid your slate, till I examine you in your figures? Go out, sir, and blow your nose first, and don't be after making a looking-glass out of the sleeve o' your jacket. Now that Thady's out, I'll hould you, boys, that none of yez knows how to expound his name—eh? do ye? But I needn't ax—well, 'tis Thaddeus; and maybe that's as much as the priest that christened him knew. Boys, you see what it is to have the larnin'—to lade the life of a gintleman, and to be able to talk deeply wid the clargy! Now I could run down any man in arguin', except a priest; and if the bishop was afther consecratin' me, I'd have as much larnin' as some of them; but you see I'm not consecrated—and—well, 'tis no matther—I only say that the more's the pity.

"Well, Thady, when did you go into subtraction?"

"The day beyond yesterday, sir; yarra

musha, sure 'twas yourself, sir, that shet me the first sum."

"Masther, sir, Thady Bradly stole my cutter—that's *my* cutter, Thady Bradly."

"No it's not" (in a low voice).

"Sir, that's my cutter—an' there's three nick's in id."

"Thady, is that his cutter?"

"There's your cutter for you. Sir, I found it on the flure and didn't know who own'd it."

"You know'd very well who own'd it; didn't Dick Martin see you liftin' it off o' my slate, when I was out?"

"Well, if Dick Martin saw him, it's enough: an' 'tis Dick that's the tindher-hearted boy, an' would knock you down wid a lump of a stone, if he saw you murtherin' but a fly!

"Well, Thady—throth Thady, I fear you'll undherstand subtraction better nor your tacher: I doubt you'll apply it to 'Practice' all your life, *ma bouchal*, and that you'll be apt to find it 'the Rule of False' at last. Well, Thady, from one thousand pounds, no shillings, and no pince, how will you subtract one pound? Put it down on your slate—this way:

1000	00	00
1	00	00

"I don't know how to shet about it, masther."

"You don't, an' how dare you tell me so, you *shingawn* you—you Cornelius Agrippa you—go to your sate and study it, or I'll—ha! be off, you—"

"Pierce Butler, come up wid your multiplication. Pierce, multiply four hundred by two—put it down—that's it:

$$\begin{array}{r} 400 \\ \text{By} \quad 2 \end{array}$$

"Twice nought is one." (Whack, whack.) "Take that as an illustration—is that one?"

"Faith, masther, that's two, anyhow; but, sir, is not wanst nought nothin'; now, masther, sure there can't be less than nothin'."

"Very good, sir."

"If wanst nought be nothin', then twice nought must be somethin', for it's double what wanst nought is—see how *I'm* sthruck for *nothin'*, an' me knows it—hoo! hoo! hoo!"

"Get out, you Esculapian; but I'll give you *somethin'* by and by, just to make you remimber that you know *nothin'*—off wid you to your sate, you spalpeen you—to tell me that there can't be less than nothin' when it's well known that sporting Squire O'Canter is worth a thousand pounds less than nothin'."

"Paddy Doran, come up to your 'Intherest'. Well, Paddy, what's the intherest of a hundred pound, at five per cent? Boys, have manners, you thieves you."

"Do you mane, masther, *per cent per annum*?"

"To be sure I do—how do you state it?"

"I'll say, as a hundher pound is to one year, so is five per cent per annum."

"Hum—why, what's the number of the sum, Paddy?"

"'Tis No. 84, sir." (The master steals a glance at the Key to Gough.)

"I only want to look at it in the Gough, you see, Paddy,—an' how dare you give me such an answer, you big-headed dunce, you—go off an' study it, you rascally Lilliputian—off wid you, and don't let me see your ugly mug till you know it.

"Now, *gintlemen*, for the Classics; and first for the Latinaarians — Larry Cassidy, come up wid your Aisop. Larry, you're a year at Latin, an' I don't think you know Latin for *frieze*, what your own coat is made of, Larry. But, in the first place, Larry, do you know what a man that taiches Classics is called?"

"A schoolmasther, sir." (Whack, whack, whack.)

"Take that for your ignorance—and that to the back of it—ha; that'll taiche you—to call a man that taiches Classics a schoolmasther, indeed! 'Tis a Profissor of Humanity itself, he is—(whack, whack, whack)—ha! you ring-leader, you; you're as bad as Dick M'Growler, that no masther in the county could get any good of, in regard that he put the whole school together by the ears, wherever he'll be, though the spalpeen wouldn't stand fight himself. Hard fortune to you! to go to put such an affront upon me, an' me a Profissor of Humanity. What's Latin for pantaloons?"

"Fem—fem—femi—"

"No, it's not, sir."

"Femora—"

"Can you do it?"

"Don't strike me, sir; don't strike me, sir, an' I will."

"I say, can you do it?"

"Femorali,"—(whack, whack, whack)—"*Ah*, sir! *ah*, sir! 'tis femorali—*ah*, sir! 'tis femorali—*ah*, sir!"

"This thratement to a Profissor of Humanity—(drives him head over heels to his seat).—Now, sir, maybe you'll have Latin for throwsers agin, or, by my sowl, if you don't, you must peel, and I'll tache you what a Profissor of Humanity is!

"Dan Rae, you little starved-looking spalpeen, will you come up to your Illocution?—and a purty figure you cut at it, wid a voice like a penny thrumpet, Dan! Well, what speech have you got now, Dan, *ma bouchal*. Is it, 'Romans, counthrymin, and lovers?'"

"No, shir; yarrah, didn't I *spake* that speech before?"

"No, you didn't, you fairy. Ah, Dan, little as you are, you take credit for more than ever you spoke, Dan, agrah; but, faith, the same thrick will come agin you sometime or other, avick! Go and get that speech betther; I see by your face you haven't it: off wid you, and get a patch upon your breeches, your little knees are through them, though 'tisn't by prayin' you've wore them, anyhow, you little hop-o'-my-thumb you, wid a voice like a rat in a thrap; off wid you, man alive!"

Sometimes the neighbouring gentry used to call into Mat's establishment, moved probably

by a curiosity excited by his character, and the general conduct of the school. On one occasion Squire Johnston and an English gentleman paid him rather an unexpected visit. Mat had that morning got a new scholar, the son of a dancing tailor in the neighbourhood; and as it was reported that the son was nearly equal to the father in that accomplishment, Mat insisted on having a specimen of his skill. He was the more anxious on this point, as it would contribute to the amusement of a travelling schoolmaster, who had paid him rather a hostile visit, which Mat, who dreaded a literary challenge, feared might occasion him some trouble.

"Come up here, you little *sartor*, till we get a dacent view of you. You're a son of Neil Malone's—aren't you?"

"Yes, and of Mary Malone, my mother, too, sir."

"Why thin, that's not bad, anyhow—what's your name?"

"Dick, sir."

"Now, Dick, *ma bouchal*, isn't it true that you can dance a hornpipe?"

"Yes, sir."

"Here, Larry Brady, take the door off the hinges, an' lay it down on the flure, till Dick Malone dances the 'Humours of Glynn': silence, boys, not a word; but just keep lookin' an."

"Who'll sing, sir? for I can't be afther dancin' a step widout the music."

"Boys, which of yez'll sing for Dick? I say,

boys, will none of yez give Dick the harmony? Well, come, Dick, I'll sing for you myself:

"Torral lol, lorral lol, lorral lol, lorral, lol—
Toldherol, lorral lol, lorral lol, lol," &c., &c.

"I say, Misther Kavanagh," said the strange master, "what angle does Dick's heel form in the second step of the treble, from the kibe on the left foot to the corner of the door forninst him?"

To this mathematical poser Mat made no reply, only sang the tune with redoubled loudness and strength, whilst little Dicky pounded the old crazy door with all his skill and alacrity. The "boys" were delighted.

"Bravo, Dick, that's a man,—welt the flure—cut the buckle—murder the clocks—rise upon suggaun, and sink upon gad—down the flure flat, foot about—keep one foot on the ground and t'other never off it," saluted him from all parts of the house.

Sometimes he would receive a sly hint, in a feigned voice, to call for "Devil stick the Fiddler", alluding to the master. Now a squeaking voice would chime in; by and by another, and so on, until the master's bass had a hundred and forty trebles, all in chorus to the same tune.

Just at this moment the two gentlemen entered; and, reader, you may conceive, but I cannot describe, the face which Mat (who sat with his back to the door, and did not see them until they were some time in the house)

exhibited on the occasion. There he sung *ore rotundo*, throwing forth an astounding tide of voice; whilst little Dick, a thin, pale-faced urchin, with his head, from which the hair stood erect, sunk between his hollow shoulders, was performing prodigious feats of agility.

"What's the matter? what's the matter?" said the gentlemen. "Good morning, Mr. Kavanagh!"

"——Tooral lol, lol——

Oh, good — Oh, good-morning — gintlemen, with extrame kindness," replied Mat, rising suddenly up, but not removing his hat, although the gentlemen instantly uncovered.

"Why, thin, gintlemen," he continued, "you have caught us in our little relaxations to-day; but—hem!—I mane to give the boys a holiday for the sake of this honest and respectable gintleman in the frieze jock, who is not entirely ignorant, you persave, of litherature; and we had a small taste, gintlemen, among ourselves, of Sathurnalian licentiousness, *ut ita dicam*, in regard of—hem!—in regard of this lad here, who was dancing a hornpipe upon the door, and we, in absence of betther music, had to supply him with the harmony; but as your honours know, gintlemen, the greatest men have bent themselves on espacial occasions."

"Make no apology, Mr. Kavanagh; it's very commendable in you to *bend* yourself by condescending to amuse your pupils."

"I beg your pardon, Squire, I can take

freedoms with you; but perhaps the concomitant gentleman, your friend here, would be pleased to take my stool. Indeed, I always use a chair, but the back of it, if I may be permitted the use of a small portion of jocularity, was as frail as the fair sect: it went home yisterday to be mended. Do, sir, condescind to be *sated*. Upon my reputation, Squire, I'm sorry that I have not accommodation for you too, sir; except one of these hassocks, which, in joint considheration with the length of your honour's legs, would be, I anticipate, rather low; but *you*, sir, will honour me by taking the stool."

By considerable importunity he forced the gentleman to comply with his courtesy; but no sooner had he fixed himself upon the seat than it overturned and stretched him, black coat and all, across a wide concavity in the floor nearly filled up with white ashes produced from mountain turf. In a moment he was completely white on one side, and exhibited a most laughable appearance; his hat, too, was scorched, and nearly burned, on the turf coals. Squire Johnston laughed heartily, as did the other schoolmaster, whilst the Englishman completely lost his temper—swearing that such another uncivilized establishment was not between the poles.

"I solemnly supplicate upwards of fifty pardons," said Mat; "bad manners to it for a stool! but, your honour, it was my own defect of speculation, bekase, you see, it's *minus* a leg—a circumstance of which you

warn't in a proper capacity to take cognation, as not being personally acquainted with it. I humbly supplicate upwards of fifty pardons."

The Englishman was now nettled, and determined to wreak his ill-temper on Mat, by turning him and his establishment into ridicule.

"Isn't this, Mister — I forget your name, sir."

"Mat Kavanagh, at your sarvice."

"Very well, my learned friend, Mr. Mat Kevanagh, isn't this precisely what is called a *hedge school*?"

"A hedge school!" replied Mat, highly offended: "my seminary a hedge school! No, sir; I scorn the *cognomen in toto*. This, sir, is a Classical and Mathematical Seminary, under the personal superintendence of your humble servant."

"Sir," replied the other master, who till then was silent, wishing perhaps to *sack* Mat in presence of the gentlemen, "it *is* a hedge school; and he is no scholar, but an ignoramus, whom I'd sack in three minutes, that would be ashamed of a hedge school."

"Ay," says Mat, changing his tone, and taking the cue from his friend, whose learning he dreaded, "it's just, for argument's sake, a hedge school; and, what is more, I scorn to be ashamed of it."

"And do you not teach occasionally under the hedge behind the house here?"

"Granted," replied Mat; "and now where's your *vis consequentiæ*?"

"Yes," subjoined the other, "produce your *vis consequentiæ*; but anyone may know by a glance that the divil a much of it's about you."

The Englishman himself was rather at a loss for the *vis consequentiæ*, and replied: "Why don't you live, and learn, and teach like civilized beings, and not assemble like wild asses—pardon me, my friend, for the simile—at least like wild colts, in such clusters behind the ditches?"

"A clusther of wild coults!" said Mat; "that shows what you are. No man of classical larnin' would use such a word. If you had stuck at the asses, we know it's a subject you're at home in—ha! ha! ha!—but you brought the joke on yourself, your honour—that is, if it's a joke—ha! ha! ha!"

"Permit me, sir," replied the strange master, "to ax your honour one question. Did you receive a *classical* education? Are you college-bred?"

"Yes," replied the Englishman; "I can reply to both in the affirmative. I'm a Cantabrigian."

"You are a *what*?" asked Mat.

"I am a Cantabrigian."

"Come, sir, you must explain yourself, if you plase. I'll take my oath that's neither a classical nor a mathematical tarm."

The gentleman smiled. "I was educated in the English college of Cambridge."

"Well," says Mat, "and maybe you would be as well off if you had picked up your larnin' in our own Thrinity; there's good picking in

Thrinity for gentlemen like you, that are sober, and harmless about the brains, in regard of not being overly bright."

"You talk with contempt of a hedge-school," replied the other master. "Did you never hear, for all so long as you war in Cambridge, of a nate little spot in Greece called the groves of Academus?

'Inter lucos Academi quærere verum'

What was Plato himself but a hedge schoolmaster? and, with humble submission, it casts no slur on an Irish tacher to be compared to *him*, I think. You forget also, sir, that the Dhruids taught under their oaks: eh?"

"Ay," added Mat, "and the Tree of Knowledge, too. Faith, an' if that same tree was now in being, if there wouldn't be hedge schoolmasters, there would be plenty of hedge scholars anyhow—particularly if the fruit was well tasted."

"I believe, Millbank, you must give in," said Squire Johnston. "I think you have got the worst of it."

"Why," said Mat, "if the gintleman's not afther bein' sacked clane, I'm not here."

"Are you a mathematician?" enquired Mat's friend, determined to follow up his victory; "do you know Mensuration?"

"Come, I do know Mensuration," said the Englishman with confidence.

"And how would you find the solid contents of *a load of thorns*?" said the other.

"Ay, or how will you consther and parse me this sintince?" said Mat:

"'Ragibus et clotibus solemus stopere windous,
Nos numerus sumus et fruges consumere nati,
Stercora flat stiro rara terra-tantaro bungo'."

"Aisy, Mister Kavanagh," replied the other; "let the Cantabrigian resolve the one I propounded him first."

"And let the Cantabrigian then take up mine," said Mat: "and if he can expound it, I'll give him a dozen more to bring home in his pocket, for the Cambridge folk to crack after their dinner, along wid their nuts."

"Can you do the 'Snail'?" enquired the stranger.

"Or 'A and B on opposite sides of a wood', without the Key?" said Mat.

"Maybe," said the stranger, who threw off the frieze jock, and exhibited a muscular frame of great power, cased in an old black coat—"maybe the gintleman would like to get a small taste of the '*Scuffle*'."

"Not at all," replied the Englishman; "I have not the least curiosity for it—I assure you I have not. What the deuce do they mean, Johnston? I hope you have influence over them."

"Hand me down that cudgel, Jack Brady, till I show the gintleman the 'Snail' and the 'Maypole'," said Mat.

"Never mind, my lad; never mind, Mr.—a—Kevanagh. I give up the contest; I resign

you the palm, gentlemen. The hedge school has beaten Cambridge hollow."

"One poser more, before you go, sir," said Mat: "Can you give me Latin for a *game-egg* in *two words*?"

"Eh, a game egg? No, by my honour, I cannot—gentlemen, I yield."

"Ay, I thought so," replied Mat; "and, faith, I believe the divil a much of the game bird about you—but bring it home to Cambridge, anyhow, and let them chew their cuds upon it, you persave; and, by the sowl of Newton, it will puzzle the whole establishment, or my name's not Kavanagh."

"It will, I am convinced," replied the gentleman, eyeing the herculean frame of the strange teacher and the substantial cudgel in Mat's hand; "it will, undoubtedly. But who is this most miserable naked lad here, Mr. Kevanagh?"

"Why, sir," replied Mat, with his broad Milesian face expanded by a forthcoming joke, "he is, sir, in a sartin and especial particularity, a namesake of your own."

"How is that, Mr. Kevanagh?"

"My name's not K*e*vanagh," replied Mat, "but K*a*vanagh; the Irish A for ever!"

"Well, but how is the lad a namesake of mine?" said the Englishman.

"Bekase, you see, he's a *poor scholar*, sir," replied Mat: "an' I hope your honour will pardon me for the facetiousness:

'Quid vetat ridentem dicere verum!'

as Horace says to Mæcenus, in the first of the Sathirs."

"There, Mr. Kavanagh, is the price of a suit of clothes for him."

"Michael, will you rise up, sir, and make the gintleman a bow? He has given you the price of a shoot of clothes, *ma bouchal*."

Michael came up with a very tattered coat hanging about him; and, catching his forelock, bobbed down his head after the usual manner, saying: "Musha yarrah, long life to your honour every day you rise, an' the Lord grant your sowl a short stay in purgatory, wishin' ye, at the same time, a happy death afther-wards!"

The gentleman could not stand this, but laughed so heartily that the argument was fairly knocked up.

It appeared, however, that Squire Johnston did not visit Mat's school from mere curiosity.

"Mr. Kavanagh," said he, "I would be glad to have a little private conversation with you, and will thank you to walk down the road a little with this gentleman and me."

When the gentlemen and Mat had gone ten or fifteen yards from the school door, the Englishman heard himself congratulated in the following phrases by the scholars:

"How do you feel afther bein' *sacked*, gintleman? The masther sacked you! You're a purty scholar! It's not you, Mr. Johnston, it's the other. You'll come to argue agin, will you? Where's your head, now? Bah! Come back till we put the *saggan* about your neck. Bah!

You must go to school to Cam-bridge agin, before you can argue an Irisher! Look at the figure he cuts! Why duv ye put the one foot past the other, when ye walk, for? Bah! Dunce!"

"Well, boys, never heed yez for that," shouted Mat; "never fear but I'll castigate yez, ye spalpeen villains, as soon as I go back. Sir," said Mat, "I supplicate upwards of fifty pardons. I assure you, sir, I'll give them a most inordinate castigation for their want of respectability."

"What's the Greek for tobaccy?" they continued, "or for Larry O'Toole? or for bletherum skite? How many beans makes five? What's the Latin for poteen, and flummery? You a mathemathitician! could you measure a snail's horn? How does your hat stay up and nothing undher it? Will you fight Barney Farrell wid one hand tied? I'd lick you myself! What's Greek for gosther?" —with many other expressions of a similar stamp.

"Sir," said Mat, "lave the justice of this in my hands. By the sowl of Newton, your own counthryman, ould Isaac, I'll flog the marrow out of them."

"You have heard, Mr. Kavanagh," continued Mr. Johnston, as they went along, "of the burning of Moore's stable and horses, the night before last. The fact is, that the magistrates of the county are endeavouring to get the incendiaries, and would render a service to any person capable, either directly or indirectly, of

facilitating that object, or stumbling on a clue to the transaction."

"And how could I do you a sarvice in it, sir?" enquired Mat.

"Why," replied Mr. Johnston, "from the children. If you could sift them in an indirect way, so as, without suspicion, to ascertain the absence of a brother, or so, on that particular night, I might have it in my power to serve you, Mr. Kavanagh. There will be a large reward offered to-morrow, besides."

"Oh, damn the penny of the reward ever I'd finger, even if I knew the whole confiagration," said Mat; "but lave the siftin' of the children wid myself, and if I can get anything out of them you'll hear from me; but your honour must keep a close mouth, or you might have occasion to lend me the money for my own funeral some o' these days. Good-morning, gintlemen."

The gentlemen departed.

"May the most ornamental kind of hard fortune pursue you every day you rise, you desavin' villain, that would have me turn *informer*, bekase your brother-in-law, rack-rintin' Moore's stables and horses were burnt; and to crown all, make the innocent childher the means of hanging their own fathers or brothers, you rap of the divil! but I'd see you and all your breed in the flames o' hell first." Such was Mat's soliloquy as he entered the school on his return.

"Now, boys, I'm afther givin' yez to-day and to-morrow for a holy-day: to-morrow we

will have our Gregory; a fine faste, plinty of poteen, and a fiddle; and you will tell your brothers and sisters to come in the evening to the dance. You must bring plinty of bacon, hung beef, and fowls, bread and cabbage—not forgetting the phaties, and sixpence a-head for the *crathur*, boys, won't yez?"

"The next day, of course, was one of festivity: every boy brought, in fact, as much provender as would serve six; but the surplus gave Mat some good dinners for three months to come. This feast was always held upon St. Gregory's day, from which circumstance it had its name. The pupils were at liberty for that day to conduct themselves as they pleased: and the consequence was that they became generally intoxicated, and were brought home in that state to their parents. If the children of two opposite parties chanced to be at the same school, they usually had a fight, of which the master was compelled to feign ignorance; for if he identified himself with either faction, his residence in the neighbourhood would be short. In other districts, where Protestant schools were in existence, a battle-royal commonly took place between the opposite establishments, in some field lying half-way between them. This has often occurred.

Everyone must necessarily be acquainted with the ceremony of *barring out*. This took place at Easter and Christmas. The master was brought or sent out on some fool's errand, the door shut and barricadoed, and the pedagogue excluded until a certain term of vacation

was extorted. With this, however, the master never complied until all his efforts at forcing an entrance were found to be ineffectual; because, if he succeeded in getting in, they not only had no claim to a long vacation, but were liable to be corrected. The schoolmaster had also generally the clerkship of the parish; an office, however, which in the country parts of Ireland is without any kind of salary, beyond what results from the patronage of the priest—a matter of serious moment to a teacher, who, should he incur his reverence's displeasure, would be immediately driven out of the parish. The master, therefore, was always tyrannical and insolent to the people in proportion as he stood high in the estimation of the priest. He was also a regular attendant at all wakes and funerals, and usually sat among a crowd of the village sages engaged in exhibiting his own learning, and in recounting the number of his religious and literary disputations.

One day, soon after the visit of the gentlemen above mentioned, two strange men came into Mat's establishment — rather, as Mat thought, in an unceremonious manner.

"Is your name Matthew Kavanagh?" said one of them.

"That is indeed the name that's upon me," said Mat with rather an infirm voice, whilst his face got as pale as ashes.

"Well," said the fellow, "we'll jist trouble you to walk with us a bit."

"How far, with submission, are yez goin' to bring me?" said Mat.

"Do you know Johnny Short's hotel?"

"My curse upon you, Findramore," exclaimed Mat in a paroxysm of anguish, "every day you rise! but your breath's unlucky to a schoolmasther; and it's no lie what was often said, that no schoolmasther ever thruv in you, but something ill came over him."

"Don't curse the town, man alive," said the constable, "but curse your own ignorance and folly; any way, I wouldn't stand in your coat for the wealth of the three kingdoms. You'll undoubtedly swing, unless you turn king's evidence. It's about Moore's business, Mr. Kavanagh."

"Damn the bit of that I'd do, even if I knew anything about it; but, God be praised for it, I can set them all at defiance—that I'm sure of. Gintlemen, innocence is a jewel."

"But Barny Brady, that keeps the shebeen house—you know *him*—is of another opinion. You and some of the Findramore boys took a sup in Barny's on a sartin night?"

"Ay did we, on many a night, and will agin, plase Providence—no harm in takin' a sup, anyhow—by the same token, that maybe you and yer friend here would have a drop of rale stuff, as a thrate from me?"

"I know a thrick worth two of that," said the man; "I thank ye kindly, Mr. Kavanagh."

One Tuesday morning, about six weeks after this event, the largest crowd ever remembered in that neighbourhood was assembled at Findramore Hill, whereon had been erected a certain wooden machine, yclept a gallows. A little

after the hour of eleven o'clock, two carts were descried winding slowly down a slope in the southern side of the town and church, which I have already mentioned as terminating the view along the level road north of the hill. As soon as they were observed, a low, suppressed ejaculation of horror ran through the crowd, painfully perceptible to the ear—in the expression of ten thousand murmurs all blending into one deep groan—and to the eye, by a simultaneous motion that ran through the crowd like an electric shock. The place of execution was surrounded by a strong detachment of military; and the carts that conveyed the convicts were also strongly guarded.

As the prisoners approached the fatal spot, which was within sight of the place where the outrage had been perpetrated, the shrieks and lamentations of their relations and acquaintances were appalling indeed. Fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, cousins, and all persons to the most remote degree of kindred and acquaintanceship, were present—all excited by the alternate expression of grief and low-breathed vows of retaliation; not only relations, but all who were connected with them by the bonds of their desperate and illegal oaths. Every eye, in fact, coruscated with a wild and savage fire, that shot from under brows knit in a spirit that seemed to cry out Blood, vengeance—blood, vengeance! The expression was truly awful; and what rendered it more terrific was the writhing reflection that numbers and physical force were unavailing against a comparatively small body

of armed troops. This condensed the fiery impulse of the moment into an expression of subdued rage, that really shot like livid gleams from their visages.

At length the carts stopped under the gallows; and, after a short interval spent in devotional exercise, three of the culprits ascended the platform, who, after recommending themselves to God, and avowing their innocence, although the clearest possible evidence of guilt had been brought against them, were launched into another life, among the shrieks and groans of the multitude. The other three then ascended; two of them either declined, or had not strength, to address the assembly. The third advanced to the edge of the boards—*it was Mat.* After two or three efforts to speak, in which he was unsuccessful from bodily weakness, he at length addressed them as follows:—

"My friends and good people—In hopes that you may be all able to demonstrate the last proposition laid down by a dying man, I undertake to address you before I depart to that world where Euclid, De Carts, and many other larned men are gone before me. There is nothing in all philosophy more true than that, as the multiplication table says, 'two and two makes four'; but it is equally veracious and worthy of credit that if you do not abnegate this system that you work the common rules of your proceedings by—if you don't become loyal men, and give up burnin' and

murdherin', the solution of it will be found on the gallows. I acknowledge myself to be guilty, for not separatin' myself clane from yez; we have been all guilty, and may God forgive thim that jist now departed wid a lie in their mouth."

Here he was interrupted by a volley of execrations and curses, mingled with "stag, informer, thraithor to the thrue cause!" which, for some time, compelled him to be silent.

"You may curse," continued Mat; "but it's too late now to abscond the truth—the '*sum*' of my wickedness and folly is worked out, and you see the '*answer*'. God forgive me, many a young crathur I enticed into the *Ribbon* business, and now it's to ind in *Hemp*! Obey the law; or, if you don't, you'll find a *lex talionis*—the construction of which is that if a man burns or murdhers, he won't miss hanging; take warning by me—by us all; for, although I take God to witness that I was not at the perpetration of the crime that I'm to be suspinded for, yet I often connived, when I might have superseded the carrying of such intintions into effectuality. I die in pace wid all the world, save an' except the Findramore people, whom may the maledictionary execration of a dying man follow into eternal infinity! My manuscription of conic sections—" Here an extraordinary buzz commenced among the crowd, which rose gradually into a shout of wild, astounding exultation. The sheriff followed the eyes of the multitude, and perceived a horseman dashing with breathless fury up

Phelim O'Toole's Courtship

Phelim O'Toole, who had the honour of being that interesting personage, an only son, was heir to a snug estate of half an acre, which had been the family patrimony since the time of his grandfather, Tyrrell O'Toole, who won it from the *Sassenah* at the point of his reaping-hook, during a descent once made upon England by a body of "spalpeens", in the month of August. This resolute little band was led on by Tyrrell, who, having secured about eight guineas by the excursion, returned to his own country, with a coarse linen travelling-bag slung across his shoulder, a new hat in one hand, and a staff in the other. On reaching once more his native village of Teernarogarah, he immediately took half an acre, for which he paid a moderate rent in the shape of daily labour as a cotter. On this he resided until death, after which event he was succeeded by his son, Larry O'Toole, the father of the "purty boy" who is about to shine in the following pages.

Phelim's father and mother had been married

near seven years without the happiness of a family. This to both was a great affliction. Sheelah O'Toole was melancholy from night to morning, and Larry was melancholy from morning to night. Their cottage was silent and solitary; the floor and furniture had not the appearance of any cottage in which Irish children are wont to amuse themselves. When they rose in the morning, a miserable stillness prevailed around them; young voices were not heard — laughing eyes turned not on their parents—the melody of angry squabbles, as the urchins, in their parents' fancy, cuffed and scratched each other, half or wholly naked, among the ashes in the morning, soothed not the yearning hearts of Larry and his wife. No, no; there was none of this. Morning passed in a quietness hard to be borne; noon arrived, but the dismal, dreary sense of childlessness hung upon the house and their hearts; night again returned, only to add its darkness to that which overshadowed the sorrowful spirits of this disconsolate couple.

For the first two or three years they bore this privation with a strong confidence that it would not last. The heart, however, sometimes becomes tired of hoping, or unable to bear the burthen of expectation, which time only renders heavier. They first began to fret and pine, then to murmur, and finally to recriminate.

Sheelah wished for children, "to have the crathurs to spake to," she said, "and comfort us when we'd get ould an' helpless."

Larry cared not, provided they had a son to inherit the "half-acre". This was the burthen of his wishes, for in all their altercations his closing observation usually was—"well, but what's to become of the half-acre?"

"What's to become of the half-acre? Arrah what do I care for the half-acre? It's not that you ought to be thinkin' of, but the dismal poor house we have, wid not the laugh or schreech of a single *pastiah* in it from year's end to year's end."

"Well, Sheelah?"

"Well, yourself, Larry? To the *diouol* I pitch your half-acre, man."

"To the *diouol* you pitch—What do you fly at me for?"

"Who's flyin' at you? They'd have little tow on their rock that 'ud fly at *you*."

"You are flyin' at me; an' only you have a hard face, you wouldn't do it."

"A hard face! Indeed it's well come over wid us, to be tould that by the likes o' you! ha!"

"No matther for that! You had betther keep a soft tongue in your head, an' a civil one, in the manetime. Why did the divil timpt you to take a fancy to me at all?"

"That's it. Throw the *grah* an' love I *once* had for you, in my teeth now. It's a manly thing for you to do, an' you may be proud of it. Dear knows, it would be betther for me I had fell in consate wid any face but yours."

"I wish to goodness you had! I wouldn't be as I am to-day. There's that half-acre—"

"To the *diouol*, I say, I pitch yourself an' your half-acre! Why do you be comin' acrass me wid your half-acre? Eh?—Why do you?"

"Come now; don't be puttin' your hands agin your sides, an' waggin' your impty head at me, like a rockin' stone."

"An' why do you be aggravatin' at me wid your half-acre?"

"Bekase I have a good right to do it. What'll become of it when I d—"

"— That for you an' it, you poor excuse!"

"When I di—"

"— That for you an' it, I say! That for you an' it, you atomy!"

"What'll become of my half-acre when I die. Did you hear *that*?"

"You ought to think of what'll become of yourself, when you die; that's what you ought to think of; but little it throubles you, you sinful reprobate! Sure the neighbours despises you."

"That's a falsity; but they know the life I lade wid *you*. The edge of your tongue's well known. They pity me, for bein' joined to the likes of you. You're bad tongue's all you're good for."

"Aren't you afeard to be flyin' in the face o' Providence the way you are? An' to be ladin' me sich a heart-scalded life for no rason?"

"It's your own story you're tellin'. Sure I haven't a day's pace wid you, or ever had these three years. But wait till next harvest, an' if I'm spared, I'll go to England. Whin I

do, I've a consate in my head, that you'll never see my face agin."

"Oh, you know that's an' ould story wid you. Many a time you threatened us wid that afore. Who knows but you'd be dhrowned on your way, an' thin we'd get another husband."

"An' be these blessed tongs, I'll do it afore I'm much ouldher?"

"An' lave me here to starve an' sthruggle by myself! Desart me like a villain, to poverty an' hardship! Marciful Mother of Heaven, look down upon me this day! but I'm the ill-thrated, an' ill-used poor crathur, by a man that I don't, an' never did, desarve it from! An' all in regard that that 'half-acre' must go to strangers! Och! oh!"

"Ay! now take to the cryin', do; rock yourself over the ashes, an' wipe your eyes wid the corner of your apron; but, I say agin, *what's to become of the half-acre?*"

"Oh, God forgive you, Larry! That's the worst I say to you, you poor half-dead blaguard!"

"Why do you massacray me wid your tongue as you do?"

"Go an—go an. I won't make you an answer, you atomy! That's what I'll do. The heavens above turn your heart this day, and give me strinth to bear my throubles an' heart-burnin', sweet Queen o' Consolation! Or take me into the arms of Parodies, sooner nor be as I am, wid a poor baste of a villain, that I never turn my tongue on, barrin' to tell him the kind of a man he is, the blaguard!"

"You're betther than you desarve to be!"

To this Sheelah made no further reply; on the contrary, she sat smoking her pipe with a significant silence, that was only broken by an occasional groan, an ejaculation, or a singularly devout upturning of the eyes to heaven, accompanied by a shake of the head, at once condemnatory and philosophical, indicative of her dissent from what he said, as well as of her patience in bearing it.

Larry, however, usually proceeded to combat all her gestures by *vivâ voce* argument; for every shake of her head he had an appropriate answer: but without being able to move her from the obstinate silence she maintained. Having thus the field to himself, and feeling rather annoyed by the want of an antagonist, he argued on in the same form of dispute, whilst she, after first calming her own spirit by the composing effects of the pipe, usually cut him short with:

"Here, take a blast o' this, maybe it'll settle you."

This was received in silence. The good man smoked on, and every puff appeared as an evaporation of his anger. In due time he was as placid as herself, drew his breath in a grave composed manner, laid his pipe quietly on the hob, and went about his business as if nothing had occurred between them.

These bickerings were strictly private, with the exception of some disclosures made to Sheelah's mother and sisters. Even these were thrown out rather as insinuations that all was

not right, than as direct assertions that they lived unhappily. Before strangers they were perfect turtles.

Larry, according to the notices of his life furnished by Sheelah, was "as good a husband as ever broke the world's bread"; and Sheelah "was as good a poor man's wife as ever threw a gown over her shoulders". Notwithstanding all this caution, their little quarrels took wind; their unhappiness became known. Larry, in consequence of a failing he had, was the cause of this. He happened to be one of those men who can conceal nothing when in a state of intoxication. Whenever he indulged in liquor too freely, the veil which discretion had drawn over their recriminations was put aside, and a dolorous history of their weaknesses, doubts, hopes, and wishes, most unscrupulously given to every person on whom the complainant could fasten. When sober, he had no recollection of this, so that many a conversation of cross-purposes took place between him and his neighbours, with reference to the state of his own domestic inquietude, and their want of children.

One day a poor mendicant came in at dinner-hour, and stood as if to solicit alms. It is customary in Ireland, when any person of that description appears during meal-times, to make him wait until the meal is over, after which he is supplied with the fragments. No sooner had the *boccagh*—as a certain class of beggars is termed—advanced past the jamb, than he was desired to sit until the dinner should be

concluded. In the meantime, with the tact of an adept in his calling, he began to ingratiate himself with Larry and his wife; and after sounding the simple couple upon their private history, he discovered that want of children was the occasion of their unhappiness.

"Well, good people," said the pilgrim, after listening to a dismal story on the subject, "don't be cast down, sure, whether or not. There's a Holy Well that I can direct yez to in the county ——. Anyone, wid trust in the saint that's over it, who'll make a pilgrimage to it on the Patthern day, won't be the worse for it. When you go there," he added, "jist turn to a Lucky Stone that's at the side of the well, say a Rosary before it, and at the end of every dicken (decade) kiss it once, ache of you. Then you're to go round the well nine times, upon your bare knees, sayin' your Pathers an' Aves all the time. When that's over, lave a ribbon or a bit of your dress behind you, or somethin' by way of an offerin', thin go into a tent an' refresh yourselves, an', for that matther, take a dance or two; come home, live happily, an' trust to the holy saint for the rest."

A gleam of newly-awakened hope might be discovered lurking in the eyes of this simple pair, who felt those natural yearnings of heart incident to such as are without offspring.

They looked forward with deep anxiety to the anniversary of the Patron Saint; and when it arrived, none certainly who attended it felt a more absorbing interest in the success of the pilgrimage than they did.

The days on which these pilgrimages are performed at such places are called Pattern or Patron days. The journey to holy wells or holy lakes is termed a Pilgrimage, or more commonly a Station. It is sometimes enjoined by the priest, as an act of penance; and sometimes undertaken voluntarily, as a devotional work of great merit in the sight of God. The crowds in many places amount to from five hundred to a thousand, and often to two, three, four, or five thousand people.

These Stations have, for the most part, been placed in situations remarkable for wild and savage grandeur, or for soft, exquisite, and generally solitary beauty. They may be found on the high and rugged mountain top; or sunk in the bottom of some still and lonely glen, far removed from the ceaseless din of the world. Immediately beside them, or close in their vicinity, stand the ruins of probably a picturesque old abbey, or perhaps a modern chapel. The appearance of these gray, ivy-covered walls is strongly calculated to stir up in the minds of the people the memory of bygone times, when their religion, with its imposing solemnities, was the religion of the land. It is for this reason, probably, that Patrons are countenanced; for if there be not a political object in keeping them up, it is beyond human ingenuity to conceive how either religion or morals can be improved by debauchery, drunkenness, and bloodshed.

Let the reader, in order to understand the situation of the place we are describing, imagine

to himself a stupendous cliff overhanging a green glen, into which tumbles a silver stream down a height of two or three hundred feet. At the bottom of this rock, a few yards from the basin formed by the cascade, in a sunless nook, was a well of cool, delicious water. This was the "Holy Well", out of which issued a slender stream, that joined the rivulet formed by the cascade. On the shrubs which grew out of the crag-cliffs around it might be seen innumerable rags bleached by the weather out of their original colour, small wooden crosses, locks of human hair, buttons, and other substitutes for property; poverty allowing the people to offer it only by fictitious emblems. Lower down in the glen, on the river's bank, was a smooth green, admirably adapted for the dance, which, notwithstanding the religious rites, is the heart and soul of a Patron.

On that morning a vast influx of persons, male and female, old and young, married and single, crowded eagerly towards the well. Among them might be noticed the blind, the lame, the paralytic, and such as were afflicted with various other diseases; nor were those good men and their wives who had no offspring to be omitted. The mendicant, the pilgrim, the boccagh, together with every other description of impostors, remarkable for attending such places, were the first on the ground, all busy in their respective vocations. The highways, the fields, and the *borreens*, or bridle-roads, were filled with living streams of people pressing forward to this great scene of fun and

religion. The devotees could in general be distinguished from the country folks by their Pharisaical and penitential visages, as well as by their not wearing shoes; for the Stations to such places were formerly made with bare feet: most persons now, however, content themselves with stripping off their shoes and stockings on coming within the precincts of the holy ground. Human beings are not the only description of animals that perform pilgrimages to holy wells and blessed lakes. Cows, horses, and sheep are made to go through their duties, either by way of prevention or cure of the diseases incident to them. This is not to be wondered at, when it is known that in their religion every domestic animal has its patron saint, to whom its owner may at any time pray on its behalf.

When the crowd was collected, nothing in the shape of an assembly could surpass it in the originality of its appearance. In the glen were constructed a number of tents, where whisky and refreshments might be had in abundance. Every tent had a fiddler or a piper, many two of them. From the top of a pole that ran up from the roof of each tent was suspended the symbol by which the owner of it was known by his friends and acquaintances. Here swung a salt herring or a turf; there a shillelah; in a third place a shoe; in a fourth place a wisp of hay; in a fifth an old hat, and so on with the rest.

The tents stood a short distance from the scene of devotion at the well, but not so far as

to prevent the spectator from both seeing and hearing what went on in each. Around the well, on bare knees, moved a body of people, thickly wedged together, some praying, some screaming, some excoriating their neighbours' shins, and others dragging them out of their way by the hair of the head. Exclamations of pain from the sick or lame, thumping oaths in Irish, recriminations in broken English, and prayers in bog Latin, all rose at once to the ears of the patron saint, who, we are inclined to think — could he have heard or seen his worshippers—would have disclaimed them altogether.

"For the sake of the Holy Virgin, keep your sharp elbows out o' my ribs!"

"My blessin' an you, young man, an' don't be lanin' an me, i' you plase!"

"*Damnho sherry orth, a rogarah ruah!* what do you mane? Is it my back you're brakin'?"

"Hell purshue you, you ould sinner, can't you keep the *spike* of your crutch out o' my *stomach*! If you love me tell me so; but, by the livin' farmer, I'll take no such hints as *that*!"

"*I'm* a pilgrim, an' don't brake my leg upon the rock, an' my blessin' an you!"

"Oh, murdher sheery! my poor child 'ill be smodhered!"

"My heart's curse an you! is it the ould cripple you're thrampin' over?"

"Here, Barny, blood alive, give this purty young girl a lift, your sowl, or she'll soon be undhermost!"

"'Och, 't was on a Christmas mornin'
That Jeroosillim was born in
The Holy Land'—

Oh, my neck's broke!—the curse—Oh! I'm kilt fairly, so I am! The curse o' Cromwell an you, an' hould away—

'The Holy Land adornin'
All by the Baltic Say.
Three angels on a Station,
All in deep meditation,
Wor takin' raycrayation,
All by the'—

contints o' the book, if you don't hould away, I say agin, an' let me go an wid my *ranu*, it'll be worse for you!—

'Wor takin' raycrayation,
All by the Baltic Say!!'"

"Help the ould woman there."

"Queen o' Patriots pray for us!—St. Abraham—go to the divil, you bosthoon; is it crushin' my sore leg you are?—St. Abraham, pray for us! St. Isinglass, pray for us! St. Jonathan—musha, I wisht you wor in America, honest man, instid o' twistin' my arm like a *gad*?—St. Jonathan, pray for us! Holy Nineveh, look down upon us wid compression an' resolution this day! Blessed Jerooslim, throw down compuncture an' meditation upon us Chrystyeens assembled here afore you to offer up our sins! Oh, grant us, blessed Catasthrophy, the holy virtues of Timptation an'

Solitude, through the improvement an' accommodation of St. Kolumbkill! To him I offer up this button, a bit o' the waistband o' my own breeches, an' a taste of my wife's petticoat, in remimbrance of us havin' made this holy Station; an' may they rise up in glory to prove it for us at the last day! Amin!"

Such was the character of the prayers and ejaculations which issued from the lips of the motley group that scrambled, and crushed, and screamed on their knees around the well. In the midst of this ignorance and absurdity there were visible, however, many instances of piety, goodness of heart, and simplicity of character. From such you could hear neither oath nor exclamation. They complied with the usages of the place modestly and attentively; though not insensible, at the same time, to the strong disgust which the general conduct of those who were both superstitious and wicked was calculated to excite. A little from the well, just where its waters mingled with those of the cascade, men and women might be seen washing the blood off their knees, and dipping such parts of their body as were afflicted with local complaints into the stream. This part of the ceremony was anything but agreeable to the eye. Most of those who went round the well drank its waters; and several of them filled flasks and bottles with it, which they brought home for the benefit of such members of the family as could not attend in person.

Whilst all this went forward at the well, scenes of a different kind were enacted lower

down among the tents. No sooner had the penitents got the difficult rites of the Station over than they were off to the whisky; and decidedly, after the grinding of their bare knees upon the hard rock—after the pushing, crushing, and exhaustion of bodily strength which they had been forced to undergo—we say that the comforts and refreshments to be had in the tents were very seasonable. Here the dancing, shouting, singing, courting, drinking, and fighting formed one wild uproar of noise that was perfectly astounding. The leading boys and the prettiest girls of the parish were all present, partaking in the rustic revelry. Tipsy men were staggering in every direction; fiddles were playing, pipes were squeaking, men were rushing in detached bodies to some fight, women were doctoring the heads of such as had been beaten, and factions were collecting their friends for a fresh battle. Here you might see a grove of shillelahs up, and hear the crash of the onset; and in another place the heads of the dancing parties bobbing up and down in brisk motion among the crowd that surrounded them. The pilgrim, having now gone through his Station, stood hemmed in by a circle of those who wanted to purchase his beads or his scapulars. The ballad singer had his own mob, from among whom his voice might be heard rising in its purest tones to the praise of—

"Brave O'Connell, the Liberathur,
An' great Salvathur of Ireland's Isle!"

As evening approached, the whisky brought

out the senseless prejudices of parties and factions in a manner quite consonant to the habits of the people. Those who, in deciding their private quarrels, had in the early part of the day beat and abused each other, now united as the subordinate branches of a greater party, for the purpose of opposing in one general body some other hostile faction. These fights are usually commenced by a challenge from one party to another, in which a person from the opposite side is simply, and often very good-humouredly, invited to assert that "black is the white of his enemy's eye"; or to touch the old coat which he is pleased to trail after him between the two opposing powers. This characteristic challenge is soon accepted; the knocking down and yelling are heard; stones fly, and every available weapon is pressed into the service on both sides. In this manner the battle proceeds, until, probably, a life or two is lost. Bones, too, are savagely broken, and blood copiously spilled by men who scarcely know the remote cause of the enmity between the parties.

Such is a hasty sketch of the Pattern, as it is called in Ireland, at which Larry and Sheelah duly performed their Station. We, for our parts, should be sorry to see the innocent pastimes of a people abolished; but surely customs which perpetuate scenes of profligacy and crime should not be suffered to stain the pure and holy character of religion.

It is scarcely necessary to inform our readers that Larry O'Toole and Sheelah complied with

every rite of the Station. To kiss the "Lucky Stone", however, was their principal duty. Larry gave it a particularly honest smack, and Sheelah impressed it with all the ardour of a devotee. Having refreshed themselves in the tent, they returned home, and, in somewhat less than a year from that period, found themselves the happy parents of an heir to the half-acre, no less a personage than young Phelim, who was called after St. Phelim, the *patron* of the "*Lucky Stone*".

The reader perceives that Phelim was born under particularly auspicious influence. His face was the herald of affection everywhere. From the moment of his birth, Larry and Sheelah were seldom known to have a dispute. Their whole future life was, with few exceptions, one unchanging honeymoon. Had Phelim been deficient in comeliness it would have mattered not a *crona baun*. Phelim, on the contrary, promised to be a beauty; both his parents thought it, felt it, asserted it; and who had a better right to be acquainted, as Larry said, "wid the outs an' ins, the ups an' downs of his face, the darlin' swaddy!"

For the first ten years of his life Phelim could not be said to owe the tailor much; nor could the covering which he wore be, without more antiquarian lore than we can give to it, exactly classed under any particular term by which the various parts of human dress are known. He himself, like some of our great poets, was externally well acquainted with the elements. The sun and he were particularly

intimate; wind and rain were his brothers, and the frost also distantly related to him. With mud he was hand and glove, and not a bog in the parish, or a quagmire in the neighbourhood, but sprung up under Phelim's tread, and threw him forward with the brisk vibration of an old acquaintance. Touching his dress, however, in the early part of his life, if he was clothed with nothing else, he was clothed with mystery. Some assert that a cast-off pair of his father's rather garments might be seen upon him each Sunday, the wrong side foremost, in accommodation with some economy of his mother's, who thought it safest, in consequence of his habits, to join them in this inverted way to a cape which he wore on his shoulders. We ourselves have seen one, who saw another, who saw Phelim in a pair of stockings which covered him from his knee-pans to his haunches, where, in the absence of waistbands, they made a pause—a breach existing from that to the small of his back. The person who saw all this affirmed, at the same time, that there was a dearth of cloth about the skirts of the integument which stood him instead of a coat. He bore no bad resemblance, he said, to a moulting fowl, with scanty feathers, running before a gale in the farmyard.

Phelim's want of dress in his merely boyish years, being in a great measure the national costume of some hundred thousand young Hibernians in his rank of life, deserves a still more particular notice. His infancy we pass over; but, from the period at which he did *not*

enter into small-clothes, he might be seen every Sunday morning, or on some important festival, issuing from his father's mansion with a piece of old cloth tied about him from the middle to the knees, leaving a pair of legs visible that were mottled over with characters which would, if found on an Egyptian pillar, put an antiquary to the necessity of constructing a new alphabet to decipher them. This, or the inverted breeches, with his father's flannel waistcoat, or an old coat that swept the ground at least two feet behind him, constituted his state dress. On week-days he threw off this finery, and contented himself, if the season were summer, with appearing in a dun-coloured shirt, which resembled a noun-substantive, for it could stand alone. The absence of soap and water is sometimes used as a substitute for milling linen among the lower Irish; and so effectually had Phelim's single change been milled in this manner that, when disenshirting at night, he usually laid it standing at his bedside, where it reminded one of frosted linen in everything but whiteness.

This, with but little variation, was Phelim's dress until his tenth year. Long before that, however, he evinced those powers of attraction which constituted so remarkable a feature in his character. He won all hearts; the chickens and ducks were devotedly attached to him; the cow, which the family always *intended* to buy, was in the habit of licking Phelim in his dreams; the two goats which they actually did buy treated him like one of themselves. Among

the first and last he spent a great deal of his early life; for as the floor of his father's house was but a continuation of the dunghill, or the dunghill a continuation of the floor, we know not rightly which, he had a larger scope, and a more unsavoury pool than usual, for amusement. Their dunghill, indeed, was the finest of its size and kind to be seen; quite a tasteful thing, and so convenient that he could lay himself down at the hearth and roll out to its foot, after which he ascended it on his legs, with all the elasticity of a young poet triumphantly climbing Parnassus.

One of the greatest wants which Phelim experienced in his young days was the want of a capacious pocket. We insinuate nothing; because with respect to his agility in climbing fruit-trees, it was only a species of exercise to which he was addicted—the eating and carrying away of the fruit being merely incidental, or, probably, the result of abstraction, which, as everyone knows, proves what is termed "the Absence of Genius". In these ambitious exploits, however, there is no denying that he bitterly regretted the want of a pocket; and in connection with this we have only to add that most of his solitary walks were taken about orchards and gardens, the contents of which he has been often seen to contemplate with deep interest. This, to be sure, might proceed from a provident regard to health, for it is a well-known fact that he has frequently returned home in the evenings distended like a boa constrictor after a gorge; yet no person was

ever able to come at the cause of his inflation. There were, to be sure, suspicions abroad, and it was mostly found that depredations in some neighbouring orchard or garden had been committed a little before the periods in which it was supposed the distention took place. We mention these things after the example of those "d——d good-natured" biographers who write great men's lives of late, only for the purpose of showing that there could be no truth in such suspicions. Phelim, we assure the enlightened public, was voraciously fond of fruit; he was frequently inflated, too, after the manner of those who indulge therein to excess; fruit was always missed immediately after the periods of his distention, so that it was impossible *he* could have been concerned in the depredations then made upon the neighbouring orchards. In addition to this, we would beg modestly to add that the pomonian temperament is incompatible with the other qualities for which he was famous. His parents were too ignorant of those little eccentricities which, had they known them, would have opened up a correct view of the splendid materials for village greatness which he possessed, and which, probably, were nipped in their bud for the want of a pocket to his breeches, or rather by the want of a breeches to his pocket; for such was the wayward energy of his disposition that he ultimately succeeded in getting the latter, though it certainly often failed him to procure the breeches. In fact, it was a misfortune to him that he was the son of his father and mother at

all. Had he been a second Melchizedec and got into breeches in time, the virtues which circumstances suppressed in his heart might have flourished like cauliflowers, though the world would have lost all the advantages arising from the splendour of his talents at going naked.

Another fact, in justice to his character, must not be omitted. His *penchant* for fruit was generally known; but few persons, at the period we are describing, were at all aware that a love of whisky lurked as a predominant trait in his character, to be brought out at a future era in his life.

Before Phelim reached his tenth year he and his parents had commenced hostilities. Many were their efforts to subdue some peculiarities of his temper which then began to appear. Phelim, however, being an only son, possessed high vantage-ground. Along with other small matters which he was in the habit of picking up might be reckoned a readiness at swearing. Several other things also made their appearance in his parents' cottage, for whose presence there, except through his instrumentality, they found it rather difficult to account. Spades, shovels, rakes, tubs, frying-pans, and many other articles of domestic use, were transferred, as if by magic, to Larry's cabin.

As Larry and his wife were both honest, these things were, of course, restored to their owners the moment they could be ascertained. Still, although this honest couple's integrity was known, there were many significant looks turned upon Phelim, and many spirited pro-

phecies uttered with especial reference to him, all of which hinted at the probability of his dying something in the shape of a perpendicular death. This habit, then, of adding to their furniture was one cause of the hostility between him and his parents; we say one, for there were at least a good round dozen besides. His touch, for instance, was fatal to crockery; he stripped his father's Sunday clothes of their buttons with great secrecy and skill; he was a dead shot at the panes of his neighbours' windows; a perfect necromancer at sucking eggs through pinholes; took great delight in calling home the neighbouring farmers' workmen to dinner an hour before it was ready; and was, in fact, a perfect master in many other ingenious manifestations of character ere he reached his twelfth year.

Now it was about this period that the small-pox made its appearance in the village. Indescribable was the dismay of Phelim's parents lest he among others might become a victim to it. Vaccination had not then surmounted the prejudices with which every discovery beneficial to mankind is at first met; and the people were left principally to the imposture of quacks, or the cunning of certain persons called "fairy men" or "sonsie women". Nothing remained now but that this formidable disease should be met by all the power and resources of superstition. The first thing the mother did was to get a Gospel consecrated by the priest, for the purpose of guarding Phelim against evil. What is termed a Gospel, and worn as a kind

of charm about the person, is simply a slip of paper, on which are written by the priest the first few verses of the Gospel of St. John. This, however, being worn for no specific purpose, was incapable of satisfying the honest woman. Superstition had its own peculiar remedy for the small-pox, and Sheelah was resolved to apply it. Accordingly she borrowed a neighbour's ass, drove it home with Phelim, however, on its back, took the interesting youth by the nape of the neck, and, in the name of the Trinity, shoved him three times under it and three times over it. She then put a bit of bread into its mouth until the ass had mumbled it a little, after which she gave the savoury morsel to Phelim as a *bonne bouche*. This was one preventive against the small-pox; but another was to be tried.

She next clipped off the extremities of Phelim's elf-locks, tied them in linen that was never bleached, and hung them beside the Gospel about his neck. This was her second cure; but there was still a third to be applied. She got the largest onion possible, which, having cut into nine parts, she hung from the roof-tree of the cabin, having first put the separated parts together. It is supposed that this has the power of drawing infection of any kind to itself. It is permitted to remain untouched until the disease has passed from the neighbourhood, when it is buried as far down in the earth as a single man can dig. This was a third cure; but there was still a fourth. She borrowed ten ass's halters from her neighbours,

"Oh, be gorra, it's well you ever seen me at all, so it is!"

"Why," said his father, "what happened you?"

"Oh, bedad, a terrible thing all out! As I was crassin' Dunroe Hill I thramped on *hungry-grass*. First, I didn't know what kem over me, I got so wake; an' every step I wint 'twas waker an' waker I was growin', till at long last down I dhrops, an' couldn't move hand or fut. I dunna how long I lay there, so I don't; but anyhow, who should be *sthreelin'* acrass the hill but an old *baccagh*.

"'My *bouchaleen dhas*,' says he—'my beautiful boy,' says he—'you're in a bad state, I find. You've thramped upon Dunroe *hungry-grass*, an' only for somethin' it's a *prabeen* you'd be afore ever you'd see home. Can you spake at all?' *says he*.

"'Oh, murdher,' says I, 'I b'lieve not!'

"'Well, here,' says the *baccagh*, 'open your purty *gub*, an' take in a thrifle of this male, an' you'll soon be stout enough.' Well, to be sure, it bates the world! I had hardly tasted the male whin I found myself as well as ever; bekase you know, mudher, that's the cure for it. 'Now,' says the *baccagh*, 'this is the spot the fairies planted their hungry-grass an, so you'll know it agin when you see it. What's your name?' says he.

"'Phelim O'Toole,' says I.

"'Well,' says he, 'go home an' tell your father an' mother to offer up a prayer to St. Phelim, your namesake, in regard that only for

called "Sonsie Mary", was called in to administer relief through the medium of certain powers which were thought to be derived from something holy and also supernatural. She brought a mysterious bottle, of which he was to take every third spoonful three times a day; it was to be administered by the hand of a young girl of virgin innocence, who was also to breathe three times down his throat, holding his nostrils closed with her fingers. The father and mother were to repeat a certain number of prayers, to promise against swearing, and to kiss the hearth-stone nine times—the one turned north, and the other south. All these ceremonies were performed with care, but Phelim's malady appeared to set them at defiance; and the old crone would have lost her character in consequence were it not that Larry, on the day of the cure, after having promised not to swear, let fly an oath at a hen whose cackling disturbed Phelim. This saved her character, and threw Larry and Sheelah into fresh despair.

They had nothing now for it but the "fairy man", to whom, despite the awful mystery of his character, they resolved to apply rather than see their only son taken from them for ever. Larry proceeded without delay to the wise man's residence, after putting a small phial of holy water in his pocket to protect himself from fairy influence. The house in which this person lived was admirably in accordance with his mysterious character. One gable of it was formed by the mound of a fairy rath, against

which the cabin stood endwise; within a mile there was no other building; the country around it was a sheep-walk, green, and beautifully interspersed with two or three solitary glens, in one of which might be seen a cave that was said to communicate underground with the rath. A ridge of high-peaked mountains ran above it, whose evening shadow, in consequence of their form, fell down on each side of the rath without obscuring its precincts. It lay south; and such was the power of superstition that during summer the district in which it stood was thought to be covered with a light and silence decidedly supernatural. In spring it was the first to be in verdure, and in autumn the last. Nay, in winter itself the rath and the adjoining valleys never ceased to be green. These circumstances were not attributed to the nature of the soil, to its southern situation, nor to the fact of its being pasture land; but simply to the power of the fairies, who were supposed to keep its verdure fresh for their own revels.

When Larry entered the house, which had an air of comfort and snugness beyond the common, a tall thin pike of a man, about sixty years of age, stood before him. He wore a brown greatcoat that fell far short of his knees; his small-clothes were closely fitted to thighs not thicker than hand telescopes: on his legs were drawn gray woollen stockings, rolled up about six inches over his small-clothes; his head was covered by a bay bob-wig, on which was a little round hat, with the edge of the leaf

turned up in every direction. His face was short and sallow; his chin peaked; his nose small and turned up. If we add to this a pair of skeleton-like hands and arms projecting about eight inches beyond the sleeves of his coat; two fiery ferret-eyes; and a long small holly wand, higher than himself, we have the outline of this singular figure.

"God save you, nabour," said Larry.

"Save you, save you, nabour," he replied, without pronouncing the name of the deity.

"This is a thrvin' time," said Larry, "to them that has childher."

The fairy-man fastened his red glittering eyes upon him with a sinister glance that occasioned Larry to feel rather uncomfortable.

"So you venthured to come to the fairy-man?"

"It is about our son, an' he all we ha—"

"Whisht!" said the man, waving his hand with a commanding air. "Whisht; I wish you wor out o' this, for it's a bad time to be here. Listen! Listen! Do you hear nothing?"

Larry changed colour. "I do," he replied "the Lord protect me! Is that *them*?"

"What did you hear?" said the man.

"Why," returned the other, "I heard the bushes of the rath all movin', jist as if a blast o' wind came among them!"

"Whisht," said the fairy-man, "they're here; you mustn't open your lips while you're in the house. I know what you want, an' will see your son. Do you hear anything more?

If you do, lay your forefinger along your nose; but don't spake."

Larry heard, with astonishment, the music of a pair of bagpipes. The tune played was one which, according to a popular legend, was first played by Satan; it is called "Go to the Devil and shake yourself". To our own knowledge, the peasantry in certain parts of Ireland refuse to sing it for the above reason. The mystery of the music was heightened, too, by the fact of its being played, as Larry thought, behind the gable of the cabin which stood against the side of the rath, out of which, indeed, it seemed to proceed.

Larry laid his finger along his nose, as he had been desired; and this appearing to satisfy the fairy-man he waved his hand to the door thus intimating that his visitor should depart; which he did immediately, but not without observing that this wild-looking being closed and bolted the door after him.

It is unnecessary to say that he was rather anxious to get off the premises of the good people; he therefore lost little time until he arrived at his own cabin; but judge of his wonder when, on entering it, he found the long-legged spectre awaiting his return.

"*Banaght dhea orrin!*" he exclaimed, starting back; "the blessin' o' God be upon us! Is it here before me you are?"

"Hould your tongue, man," said the other with a smile of mysterious triumph. "Is it that you wondher at? Ha, ha! That's little of it!"

"But how did you know my name? or who I was? or where I lived at all? Heaven protect us! It's beyant belief, clane out."

"Hould your tongue," replied the man; "don't be axin' me anything o' the kind. Clear out both of ye, till I begin my *pisthrogues* wid the sick child. Clear out, I say!"

With some degree of apprehension Larry and Sheelah left the house as they had been ordered, and the fairy-man, having pulled out a flask of poteen, administered a dose of it to Phelim; and never yet did patient receive his medicine with such a relish. He licked his lips, and fixed his eye upon it with a longing look.

"Be gorra," said he, "that's fine stuff entirely. Will you lave me the bottle?"

"No," said the fairy-man, "but I'll call an' give you a little of it wanst a day."

"Ay, do," replied Phelim; "the divil a fear o' me if I get enough of it. I hope I'll see you often."

The fairy-man kept his word; so that what with his bottle, a hardy constitution, and light bed-clothes, Phelim got the upper hand of his malady. In a month he was again on his legs; but, alas! his complexion, though not changed to deformity, was wofully out of joint. His principal blemish, in addition to the usual marks left by this complaint, consisted in a drooping of his left eyelid, which gave to his whole face a cast highly ludicrous.

When Phelim felt thoroughly recovered he claimed a pair of "leather crackers", a hare-

skin cap, and a coat, with a pertinacity which kept the worthy couple in a state of inquietude until they complied with his importunity. Henceforth he began to have everything his own way. His parents, sufficiently thankful that he was spared to them, resolved to thwart him no more.

"It's well we have him at all," said his mother; "sure if we hadn't him we'd be breakin' our hearts, and sayin' if it 'ud plase God to send him back to us that we'd be happy even wid givin' him his own way."

"They say it breaks their strinth, too," replied his father, "to be crubbin' them in too much, an' snappin' at thim for every hand's turn, an' I'm sure it does too."

"Doesn't he become the pock-marks well, the crathur?" said the mother.

"Become!" said the father; "but doesn't the droop in his eye set him off all to pieces!"

"Ay," observed the mother, "an' how the crathur went round among all the neighbours to show them the leather crackers! To see his little pride out o' the hare-skin cap, too, wid the hare's ears stickin' out of his temples. That an' the droopin' eye undher them makes him look so cunnin' an' ginteel that one can't help havin' their heart fixed upon him."

"He'd look betther still if that ould coat wasn't sweepin' the ground behind him; an' what 'ud you think to put a pair o' *martyeens* on his legs to hide the mazles? He might go anywhere thin."

"Throth he might; but, Larry, w

world wide could be in the fairy-man's bottle that Phelim took sich a likin' for it? He tould me this mornin' that he'd suffer to have the pock agin' set in case he was cured wid the same bottle."

"Well, the Heaven be praised, anyhow, that we have a son for the half-acre, Sheelah."

"Amin! An' let us take good care of him, now that he's spared to us."

Phelim's appetite, after his recovery, was anything but a joke to his father. He was now seldom at home, except during meal-times; for wherever fun or novelty was to be found, Phelim was present. He became a regular attendant upon all the sportsmen. To such he made himself very useful by his correct knowledge of the best covers for game, and the best pools for fish. He was acquainted with every rood of land in the parish; knew with astonishing accuracy where coveys were to be sprung and hares started. No hunt was without him; such was his wind and speed of foot that to follow a chase and keep up with the horsemen was to him only a matter of sport. When daylight passed night presented him with amusements suitable to himself. No wake, for instance, could escape him; a dance without young Phelim O'Toole would have been a thing worthy to be remembered. He was zealously devoted to cock-fighting; on Shrove-Tuesday he shouted loudest among the crowd that attended the sport of throwing at cocks tied to a stake; foot-ball and hurling never occurred without him. Bull-baiting—for it was common in his youth

—was luxury to him; and, ere he reached fourteen, everyone knew Phelim as an adept at card-playing. Wherever a sheep, a leg of mutton, a dozen of bread, or a bottle of whisky was put up in a shebeen house, to be played for by the country gamblers at the five and ten, or spoil'd five, Phelim always took a hand and was generally successful. On these occasions he was frequently charged with an over-refined dexterity; but Phelim usually swore, in vindication of his own innocence, until he got black in the face, as the phrase among such characters goes.

The reader is to consider him now about fifteen — a stout, overgrown, unwashed cub. His parents' anxiety that he should grow strong prevented them from training him to any kind of employment. He was eternally going about in quest of diversion; and wherever a knot of idlers was to be found there was Phelim. He had, up to this period, never worn a shoe, nor a single article of dress that had been made for himself, with the exception of one or two pair of sheep-skin small-clothes. In this way he passed his time, bare-legged, without shoes, clothed in an old coat much too large for him, his neck open, and his sooty locks covered with the hare-skin cap, the ears as usual sticking out above his brows. Much of his time was spent in setting the idle boys of the village to fight; and in carrying lying challenges from one to another. He himself was seldom without a broken head or a black eye; for in Ireland he who is known to be fond of quarrelling, as the

people say, usually "gets enough and lavins of it". Larry and Sheelah, thinking it now high time that something should be done with Phelim, thought it necessary to give him some share of education. Phelim opposed this bitterly as an unjustifiable encroachment upon his personal liberty; but by bribing him with the first and only suit of clothes he had yet got, they at length succeeded in prevailing on him to go.

The school to which he was sent happened to be kept in what is called an inside kiln. This kind of kiln is usually—but less so now than formerly—annexed to respectable farmers' outhouses, to which, in agricultural districts, it forms a very necessary appendage. It also serves at the same time as a barn, the kiln-pot being sunk in the shape of an inverted cone at one end, but divided from the barn floor by a wall about three feet high. From this wall beams run across the kiln-pot, over which, in a transverse direction, are laid a number of rafters like the joists of a loft, but not fastened. These ribs are covered with straw, over which again is spread a winnow cloth to keep the grain from being lost. The fire is sunk on a level with the bottom of the kiln-pot, that is, about eight or ten feet below the floor of the barn. The descent to it is by stairs formed at the side wall. We have been thus minute in describing it, because, as the reader will presently perceive, the feats of Phelim render it necessary.

On the first day of his entering the school

he presented himself with a black eye; and as his character was well known to both master and scholars, the former felt no hesitation in giving him a wholesome lecture upon the subject of his future conduct. For at least a year before this time he had gained the nickname of "Blessed Phelim" and "Bouncing", epithets bestowed on him by an ironical allusion to his patron saint and his own habits.

"So Blessed Phelim," said the master, "you are coming to school!!! Well, well! I only say that miracles will never cease. Arrah, Phelim, will you tell us candidly—ah!—I beg your pardon; I mean, will you tell us the best lie you can coin upon the cause of your coming to imbibe moral and literary knowledge? Silence, boys, till we hear Blessed Phelim's lie."

"You must hear it, masther," said Phelim. "I'm comin' to larn to read an' write."

"Bravo! by the bones of Prosodius, I expected a lie, but not such a thumper as that. And you're coming wid a black eye to prove it! A black eye, Phelim, is the blackguard's coat of arms; and to do you justice you are seldom widout your crest."

For a few days Phelim attended the school, but learned not a letter. The master usually sent him to be taught by the youngest lads, with a hope of being able to excite a proper spirit of pride and emulation in a mind that required some extraordinary impulse. One day he called him up to ascertain what progress he had actually made; the unsuspecting teacher sat at the time upon the wall which separated

the barn floor from the kiln-pot, with his legs dangling at some distance from the ground. It was summer, and the rafters used in drying the grain had been removed. On finding that Blessed Phelim, notwithstanding all the lessons he had received, was still in a state of the purest ignorance, he lost his temper, and brought him over between his knees that he might give him an occasional cuff for his idleness. The lesson went on, and the master's thumps were thickening about Phelim's ears, much to the worthy youth's displeasure.

"Phelim," said the master, "I'll invert you as a scarecrow for dunces. I'll lay you against the wall, with your head down and your heels up, like a forked carrot."

"But how will you manage that?" said Phelim. "What 'ud *I* be doin' in the manetime?"

"I'll find a way to manage it," said the master.

"To put my head down an' my heels up, is id?" enquired Phelim.

"You've said it, my worthy," returned his teacher.

"If you don't know the way," replied the pupil, "I'll show you;" getting his shoulder under the master's leg and pitching him heels over head into the kiln-pot. He instantly seized his cap and ran out of the school, highly delighted at his feat; leaving the scholars to render the master whatever assistance was necessary. The poor man was dangerously hurt, for in addition to a broken arm he received

half a dozen severe contusions on the head, and in different parts of the body.

This closed Phelim's education; for no persuasion could ever induce him to enter a school afterwards; nor could any temptation prevail on the neighbouring teachers to admit him as a pupil.

Phelim now shot up rapidly to the stature of a young man; and a graceful slip was he. From the period of fifteen until nineteen he was industriously employed in idleness. About sixteen he began to look after the girls, and to carry a cudgel. The father in vain attempted to inoculate him with a love of labour; but Phelim would not receive the infection. His life was a pleasanter one. Sometimes, indeed, when he wanted money to treat the girls at fairs and markets, he would prevail on himself to labour a week or fortnight with some neighbouring farmer; but the moment he had earned as much as he deemed sufficient, the spade was thrown aside. Phelim knew all the fiddlers and pipers in the barony; was master of the ceremonies at every wake and dance that occurred within several miles of him. He was a crack dancer, and never attended a dance without performing a hornpipe on a door or a table; no man could shuffle, or treble, or cut, or spring, or caper with him. Indeed it was said that he could dance "Moll Roe" upon the end of a five-gallon keg, and snuff a mould candle with his heels, yet never lose the time. The father and mother were exceedingly proud of Phelim. The former, when he found him

grown up and associating with young men, began to feel a kind of ambition in being permitted to join Phelim and his companions, and to look upon the society of his own son as a privilege. With the girls Phelim was a beauty without paint. They thought every wake truly a scene of sorrow if he did not happen to be present. Every dance was doleful without him. Phelim wore his hat on one side, with a knowing but careless air; he carried his cudgel with a good-humoured dashing spirit, precisely in accordance with the character of a man who did not care *a traneen* whether he drank with you as a friend, or fought with you as a foe. Never were such songs heard as Phelim could sing, nor such a voice as that with which he sang them. His attitudes and action were inimitable. The droop in his eye was a standing wink at the girls; and when he sang his funny songs, with what practised ease he gave the darlings a roguish chuck under the chin! Then his jokes! "Why, faix," as the fair ones often said of him, "before Phelim speaks at all one laughs at what he says." This was fact. His very appearance at a wake, dance, or drinking-match was hailed by a peal of mirth. This heightened his humour exceedingly; for, say what you will, laughter is to wit what air is to fire—the one dies without the other.

Let no one talk of beauty being on the surface. This is a popular error, and no one but a superficial fellow would defend it. Among ten thousand you could not get a more unfavourable surface than Phelim's. His face re-

sembled the rough side of a cullender, or as he was often told in raillery, "you might grate potatoes on it". The lid of his left eye, as the reader knows, was like the lid of a salt-box, always closed; and when he risked a wink with the right it certainly gave him the look of a man shutting out the world and retiring into himself for the purpose of self-examination. No, no; beauty is in the mind; in the soul; otherwise Phelim never could have been such a prodigy of comeliness among the girls. This was the distinction the fair sex drew in his favour. "Phelim," they would say, "is not purty, but he's very comely." "Bad end to the one of him but would stale a pig off a tether wid his winnin' ways." And so he would too, without much hesitation, for it was not the first time he had stolen his father's.

From nineteen until the close of his minority Phelim became a distinguished man in fairs and markets. He was, in fact, the hero of the parish; but unfortunately he seldom knew on the morning of the fair-day the name of the party or faction on whose side he was to fight. This was merely a matter of priority; for whoever happened to give him the first treat uniformly secured him. The reason of this pliability on his part was that Phelim, being every person's friend, by his good-nature, was nobody's foe, except for the day. He fought for fun and for whisky. When he happened to drub some companion or acquaintance on the opposite side, he was ever ready to express his regret at the circumstance, and abused

them heartily for not having treated him first.

Phelim was also a great Ribbonman; and from the time he became initiated into the system his eyes were wonderfully opened to the oppressions of the country. Sessions, decrees, and warrants he looked upon as gross abuses; assizes, too, by which so many of his friends were put to some inconvenience, he considered as the result of Protestant ascendancy—cancers that ought to be cut out of the constitution. Bailiffs, drivers, tithe-proctors, tax-gatherers, policemen, and parsons he thought were vermin that ought to be compelled to emigrate to a much *warmer* country than Ireland.

There was no such hand in the county as Phelim at an *alibi*. Just give him the outline—a few leading particulars of the fact—and he would work wonders. One would think, indeed, that he had been born for that especial purpose; for as he was never known to utter a syllable of truth but once, when he had a design in not being believed, so there was no risk of a lawyer getting truth out of him. No man was ever afflitted with such convenient maladies as Phelim; even his sprains, toothaches, and colics seemed to have entered into the Whiteboy system. But, indeed, the very diseases in Ireland are seditious. Many a time has a toothache come in to aid Paddy in obstructing the course of justice; and a colic been guilty of misprision of treason. Irish deaths, too, are very disloyal, and frequently at variance

As an alibist, however, his career was, like, that of all alibists, a short one. The fact was, that his face soon became familiar to the court and the lawyers, so that his name and appearance were ultimately rather hazardous to the cause of his friends.

Phelim, on other occasions, when summoned as evidence against his well-wishers or brother Ribbonmen, usually forgot his English, and gave his testimony by an interpreter. Nothing could equal his ignorance and want of common capacity during these trials. His face was as free from every visible trace of meaning as if he had been born an idiot. No block was ever more impenetrable than he.

"What is the noble gintleman sayin'?" he would ask in Irish; and on having that explained he would enquire: "What is that?" then demand a fresh explanation of the last one, and so on successively, until he was given up in despair.

Sometimes, in cases of a capital nature, Phelim, with the consent of his friends, would come forward and make disclosures in order to have them put upon their trial and acquitted; lest a real approver, or someone earnestly disposed to prosecute, might appear against them. Now the *alibi* and its usual accompaniments are all of old standing in Ireland; but the master-stroke to which we have alluded is a modern invention. Phelim would bear evidence against them; and whilst the government —for it was mostly in government prosecutions he adventured this—believed they had ample

Larry, as if Phelim were too modest to speak for himself, seldom met a young girl without laying siege to her for the son. He descanted upon his good qualities, glossed over his defects, and drew deeply upon invention in his behalf. Sheelah, on the other hand, was an eloquent advocate for him. She had her eye upon half a dozen of the village girls, to every one of whom she found something to say in Phelim's favour.

that the "half-acre" was frequently in hazard of leaving the family altogether. The father, therefore, felt quite willing, if Phelim married, to leave him the inheritance and seek a new settlement for himself. Or, if Phelim preferred leaving him, he agreed to give him one-half of it, together with an equal division of all his earthly goods; to wit—two goats, of which Phelim was to get one; six hens and a cock, of which Phelim was to get three hens and the chance of a toss-up for the cock; four stools, of which Phelim was to get two; two pots—a large one and a small one—the former to go with Phelim; three horn spoons, of which Phelim was to get one, and the chance of a toss-up for the third. Phelim was to bring his own bed, provided he did not prefer getting a bottle of fresh straw as a connubial luxury. The blanket was a tender subject; for, having been fourteen years in employment, it entangled the father and Phelim touching the prudence of the latter claiming it all. The son was at length compelled to give it up, at least in the character of an appendage to his marriage property. He feared that the wife, should he not be able to replace it by a new one, or should she herself not be able to bring him one, as part of her dowry, would find the honeymoon rather lively. Phelim's bedstead admitted of no dispute, the floor of the cabin having served him in that capacity ever since he began to sleep in a separate bed. His pillow was his small-clothes, and his quilt his own coat, under which he slept snugly enough.

The father having proposed, and the son acceded to these arrangements, the next thing to be done was to pitch upon a proper girl as his wife. This being a more important matter, was thus discussed by the father and son one evening, at their own fireside, in the presence of Sheelah.

"Now, Phelim," said the father, "look about you, an' tell us what girl in the neighbourhood you'd like to be married to."

"Why," replied Phelim, "I'll lave that to you; jist point out the girl you'd *like* for your daughter-in-law, an' be she rich, poor, ould, or ugly *I'll* delude her. That's the chat."

"Ah, Phelim, if you could put your comedher an Gracey Dalton you'd be a made boy. She has the full of a rabbit-skin o' guineas."

"A made boy! Faith, they say I'm that as it is, you know. But would you *wish* me to put my comedher on Gracey Dalton? Spake out."

"To be sure I would."

"Ay," observed the mother, "or what 'ud

"Don't make a goose of yourself, ould man," observed Phelim. "Do you think, if I set about it, that I'd not manufacture her senses as asy as I'd peel a pratee?"

"Well, well," replied the father, "in the name o' Goodness make up to her. Faith it 'ud be something to have a jauntin' car in the family!"

"Ay, but what the sorra will I do for a suit o' clo'es?" observed Phelim. "I could never go near her in these breeches. My elbows, too, are out o' this ould coat, bad luck to it! An' as for a waistcoat, why, I dunna but it's a sin to call what I'm wearin' a waistcoat at all. Thin agin—why, blood alive, sure I can't go to her barefooted, an' I dunna but it 'ud be dacenter to do that same than to step out in sich excuses for brogues as these. An' in regard o' the stockins', why, I've pulled them down, sthrivin' to look dacent, till one 'ud think the balls o' my legs is at my heels."

"The sorra word's in that but thruth, anyhow," observed the father; "but what's to be done? For *we* have no way of gettin' them."

"Faith, I don't know that," said Phelim. "What if we'd borry? I could get the loan of a pair of breeches from Dudley Dwire, an' a coat from Sam Appleton. We might thry Billy Brady for a waistcoat an' a pair o' stockings. Barny Buckram-back, the pinsioner, 'ud lend me his pumps; an' we want nothing now but a hat."

"Nothin' undher a Caroline 'ud do goin' there," observed the father.

wid; but, anyhow, ould Harry Connolly's to stand in the chapel nine Sundays, an' to make three Stations to Lough Dergh for it. Bedad, they say it's as purty a crathur as you'd see in a day's thravellin'."

"Harry Connolly! Why, I know Harry, but I never heard of Biddy Duignan or her father at all. Harry Connolly! Is it a man that's bent over his staff for the last twenty years! Hut, tut, Phelim, don't say sich a thing."

"Why, ma'am, sure he takes wid it himself; he doesn't deny it at all, the ould sinner."

"Oh, that I mayn't sin, Phelim, if one knows who to thrust in this world, so they don't. Why the desateful ould—hut, Phelim, I can't give in to it."

"Faix, ma'am, no wondher; but sure when he confesses it himself! Bedad, Mrs. Doran, I never seen you look so well. Upon my sowl, you'd take the shine out o' the youngest o' thim!"

No, nor thirty. Faith I know them that's not more nor five or six-an'-twenty that 'ud be glad to borry the loan of your face for a while. Divil a word o' lie in that."

"No, no, Phelim, aroon, I seen the day; but that's past. I remimber when the people *did* say I was worth lookin' at. Won't you sit near the fire? You're in the dhraft there."

"Thank you kindly, ma'am; faith, you have the name far an' near for bein' the civilest woman alive this day. But, upon my sowl, if you wor ten times as civil, an' say that you're not aquil to any young girl in the parish, I'd dispute it wid you; an' say it was nothin' else than a bounce."

"Arrah, Phelim, darlin', how can you palaver me that way? I hope your dacent father's well, Phelim, an' your honest mother."

"Divil a fear o' them. Now I'd hould nine to one that the purtiest o' them hasn't a sweeter mout' than you have. By dad you have a pair o' lips, God bless them that—well, well—"

Phelim here ogled her with looks particularly wistful.

"Phelim, you're losin' the little senses you had."

"Faix, an' it's you that's taken them out o' me, then. A purty woman always makes a fool o' me. Divil a word o' lie in it. Faix, Mrs. Doran, ma'am, you have a chin o' your own! Well, well! Oh, be gorra, I wish I hadn't come out this mornin' anyhow!"

"Arrah, why, Phelim? In throth it's you that's the quare Phelim!"

"Why, ma'am—Oh, bedad, it's a folly to talk. I can't go widout tastin' them. Sich a pair o' timptations as your lips, barrin' your eyes, I didn't see this many a day."

"Tastin' what, you mad crathur?"

"Why I'll show you what I'd like to be afther tastin'. Oh! bedad, I'll have no refusin'; a purty woman always makes a foo—"

"Keep away, Phelim; keep off—bad end to you; what do you mane? Don't you see Fool Art lyin' in the corner there undher the sacks? I don't think he's asleep."

"Fool Art! why, the misfortunate idiot, what about him? Sure he hasn't sinse to know the right hand from the left. Bedad, ma'am, the thruth is, that a purty woman always makes a—"

"Throth an' you won't," said she, struggling.

"Throth an' I will, thin, taste the same lips, or we'll see who's strongest!"

housekeeper, "it won't do. Be asy now, or I'll get angry. The priest, too, will hear the noise, and so will Fool Art."

"To the divil wid Fool Art, an' the priest too," said Phelim: "who cares a buckey about the priest when a purty woman like you is consarn—"

"What's this?" said the priest, stepping down from the parlour—"what's the matter? Oh, ho, upon my word, Mrs. Doran! Very good, indeed! Under my own roof, too! An' pray, ma'am, who is the gallant? Turn round, young man. Yes, I see! Why, better and better! Bouncing Phelim O'Toole, that never spoke truth! I think, Mr. O'Toole, that when you come a-courting you ought to consider it worth while to appear somewhat more smooth in your habiliments. I simply venture to give that as my opinion."

"Why, sure enough," replied Phelim, without a moment's hesitation; "your reverence has *found us out.*"

"*Found you out!* Why, is *that* the tone you speak in?"

"Faith, sir, thruth's best. I wanted her to tell it to you long ago, but she wouldn't. Howsomever, it's still time enough.—Hem! The thruth, sir, is, that Mrs. Doran an' I is goin' to get the words said as soon as we can; so, sir, wid the help o' Goodness, I came to see if your reverence 'ud call us next Sunday wid a blessin'."

Mrs. Doran had, for at least a dozen round years before this, been in a state of hopelessness

"Is this true, Mrs. Doran?" enquired the priest, a second time.

Mrs. Doran could not, with any regard to the delicacy of her sex, give an assent without proper emotion. She accordingly applied her apron to her eyes and shed a few natural tears in reply to the affecting query of the pastor.

Phelim, in the meantime, began to feel mystified. Whether Mrs. Doran's tears were a proof that she was disposed to take the matter seriously, or whether they were tears of shame and vexation for having been caught in the character of a romping old hoyden, he could not then exactly decide. He had, however, awful misgivings upon the subject.

"Then," said the priest, "it is to be understood that I'm to call you both on Sunday."

"There's no use in keepin' it back from you," replied Mrs. Doran. "I know it's foolish of me; but we have all our failin's, and to be fond of Phelim there is mine. Your reverence *is* to call us next Sunday, as Phelim tould you. I am sure I can't tell you how he deluded me at all, the desaver o' the world!"

Phelim's face during this acknowledgment was, like Goldsmith's haunch of venison, "a subject for painters to study". His eyes projected like a hare's, until nothing could be seen but the balls. Even the drooping lid raised itself up as if it were never to droop again.

"Well," said the priest, "I shall certainly not use a single argument to prevent you. Your choice, I must say, does you credit, particularly when it is remembered that you have come at

least to years of discretion. Indeed, many persons might affirm that you have gone beyond them; but I say nothing. In the meantime your wishes must be complied with. I will certainly call Phelim O'Toole and Bridget Doran on Sunday next; and one thing I know, that we shall have a very merry congregation."

Phelim's eyes turned upon the priest and the old woman alternately with an air of bewilderment which, had the priest been a man of much observation, might have attracted his attention.

"Oh, murdher alive, Mrs. Doran," said Phelim, "how am I to do for clo'es? Faith, I'd like to appear *dacent* in the thing, anyhow."

"True," said the priest. "Have you made no provision for smoothing the externals of your admirer? Is he to appear in this trim?"

"Bedad, sir," said Phelim, "we never thought o' that. All the world knows, your reverence, that I might carry my purse in my eye an' never feel a mote in it. But the thruth is, sir, she was so lively on the subject—in a kind of a pleasant, coaxin' hurry of her own—an' indeed I was so myself, too. Augh, Mrs. Doran! Be gorra, sir, she put her comedher an me entirely, so she did. Well, be my sowl, I'll be the flower of a husband to her anyhow. I hope your reverence'll come to the christ'nin? But about the clo'es;—bad luck saize the tack I have to put to my back but what you see an me, if we wor to be married to-morrow."

"Well, Phelim, aroon," said Mrs. Doran,

"How much money shall I give him?" said the priest.

"Indeed, sir, I think you ought to know that; I'm ignorant of what 'ud make a dacent weddin'. We don't intend to get marrid undher a hedge; we've frinds on both sides, an', of coorse, we must have them about us, plase Goodness."

"Be gorra, sir, it's no wondher I'm fond of her, the darlin'? Bad win to you, Mrs. Doran, how did you come over me at all?"

"Bridget," said the priest, "I have asked you a simple question, to which I expect a plain answer. What money am I to give this tallow-hearted swain of yours?"

"Why, your reverence, whatsomever you think may be enough for full, an' plinty, an' dacency at the weddin'."

"Not forgetting the *thatch* for me, in the manetime," said Phelim. "Nothin' less will sarve us, plase your reverence. Maybe, sir, you'd think of comin' to the weddin' yourself?"

"There are in my hands," observed the priest, "one hundred and twenty-two guineas of your money, Bridget. Here, Phelim, are ten for your wedding suit and wedding expenses. Go to *your* wedding! No! don't suppose for a moment that I countenance this transaction in the slightest degree. I comply with your wishes because I heartily despise you both, but certainly this foolish old woman most. Give me an acknowledgment for this, Phelim."

"God bless you, sir!" said Phelim, as if he had paid them a compliment. "In regard o'

the acknowledgment, sir, I acknowledge it wid all my heart; but bad luck to the scrape at all I can write."

"Well, no matter. You admit, Bridget, that I give this money to this blessed youth by your authority and consent."

"Surely, your reverence; I'll never go back of it."

"Now, Phelim," said the priest, "you have the money; pray get married as soon as possible."

"I'll give you my oath," said Phelim; "an' be the blessed iron tongs in the grate there I'll not lose a day in gettin' myself spliced. Isn't she the tendher-hearted sowl, your reverence? Augh, Mrs. Doran!"

"Leave my place," said the priest. "I cannot forget the old proverb, that one fool makes many, but an old fool is worse than any. So it is with this old woman."

"Ould woman! Oh, thin I'm sure I don't desarve this from your reverence!" exclaimed the housekeeper, wiping her eyes: "if I'm a little seasoned now, you know I wasn't always so. If ever there was a faithful sarvant I was that, an' managed your house and place as honestly as I'll manage my own, plase Goodness."

As they left the parlour Phelim became the consoler.

"Whisht, you darlin'!" he exclaimed. "Sure you'll have Bouncin' Phelim to comfort you. But now that he has shut the door, what—hem—I'd take it as a piece o' civility if you'd

open my eyes a little; I mane—hem—was it—is this doin' *him*, or how? Are you—hem—do you *undherstand* me, Mrs. Doran?"

"What is it you want to know, Phelim? I think everything is very plain."

"Oh, the divil a plainer, I suppose! But in the manetime, might one axe, out o' mere curiosity, if you're *in airnest*?"

"In airnest! Arrah, what did I give you my money for, Phelim? Well, now that everything is settled, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me."

"A bad *what*?"

"I say, God forgive you if you make a bad husband to me. I'm afeared, Phelim, that I'll be too foolish about you—that I'll be too fond of you."

Phelim looked at her in solemn silence, and then replied: "Let us trust in God that you may be enabled to overcome the weakness. Pray to Him to avoid all folly, an' above everything, to give you a dacent stock of discration, for it's a mighty fine thing for a woman of your yea—hem, a mighty fine thing it is, indeed, for a sasoned woman, as you say you are."

"When will the weddin' take place, Phelim?"

"The *what*?" said Phelim, opening his brisk eye with a fresh stare of dismay.

"Why, the weddin', acushla. When will it take place? I think the Monday afther the last call 'ud be the best time. We wouldn't lose a day thin. Throth, I long to hear my last call over, Phelim, jewel."

Phelim gave her another look.

"The last call! Thin, by the vestment, you don't long half as much for your *last* call as I do."

"Arrah, Phelim, did you take the—the—what you wor wantin' awhile agone? Throth, myself disremimbers."

"Ay, a round dozen o' them. How can you forget it?"

The idiot in the corner here gave a loud snore, but composed himself to sleep, as if insensible to all that passed.

"Throth, an' I do forget it. Now, Phelim, you'll not go till you take a cup o' tay wid myself. Throth, I do forget it, Phelim darlin', jewel."

Phelim's face now assumed a very queer expression. He twisted his features into all possible directions; brought his mouth first round to one ear and then to the other; put his hand, as if in great pain, on the pit of his stomach; lifted one knee up till it almost touched his chin, then let it down, and instantly brought up the other in a similar manner.

"Phelim, darlin', what ails you?" enquired the tender old nymph. "Wurrah, man alive, aren't you well?"

"Oh, be the vestment," said Phelim, "what's this at all? Murdher sheery, what'll I do! Oh, I'm very bad! At death's door, so I am! Be gorra, Mrs. Doran, I must be off."

"Wurrah, Phelim dear, won't you stop till we settle everything?"

"Oh, purshuin' to the ha'p'orth I can settle

till I recover o' this murdherin' colic! All's asthray wid me in the inside. I'll see you—I'll see you—*Hanim an' dioul!* what's this?—I must be off like a shot—oh, murdher sheery!—but—but—I'll see you to-morrow. In the manetime I'm—I'm—for ever oblaged to you for—for—lendin' me the—loan of—oh, by the vestments, I'm a gone man!—for lendin' me the *loan* of the ten guineas—Oh, I'm gone!"

Phelim disappeared on uttering these words, and his strides on passing out of the house were certainly more rapid and vigorous than those of a man labouring under pain. In fact he never looked behind him until one-half the distance between the priest's house and his father's cabin had been fairly traversed.

Some misgivings occurred to the old housekeeper, but her vanity, having been revived by Phelim's blarney, would not permit her to listen to them. She had, besides, other motives to fortify her faith in his attachment. First, there was her money, a much larger sum than ever Phelim could expect with any *other* woman, young or old; again, they were to be called on the following Sunday, and she knew that when a marriage affair proceeds so far, obstruction or disappointment is not to be apprehended.

When Phelim reached home he found the father returned after having borrowed a full suit of clothes for him. Sam Appleton, on hearing from Larry that Bouncing Phelim was about to get a "Great Match", generously lent him coat, waistcoat, hat, and small-clothes.

When Phelim presented himself at home he

scarcely replied to the queries put to him by his father and mother concerning his interview with the priest. He sat down, rubbed his hands, scratched his head, rose up, and walked to and fro, in a mood of mind so evidently between mirth and chagrin that his worthy parents knew not whether to be merry or miserable.

"Phelim," said the mother, "did you take anything while you wor away?"

"Did I take anything! is it? Arrah, be asy, ould woman! Did I take anything! Faith you may say that!"

"Let us know, anyhow, what's the matther wid you?" asked the father.

"'Tare-an-ounze!" exclaimed the son, "what is this for, at all, at all? It's too killin' I am, so it is."

"You're not lookin' at Sam Appleton's clo'es," said the father, "that he lent you the loan of, hat an' all?"

"Do you want to put an affront upon me, ould man? To the divil wid himself an' his clo'es! When I want clo'es I'll buy them wid my own money!"

"Larry," observed the mother, "there's yourself all over—as proud as a paycock when the sup's in your head, an' 'ud spake as big widout the sign o' money in your pocket as if you had the rint of an estate."

"What do you say about the sign o' money?" exclaimed Phelim with a swagger. "Maybe you'll call *this* the sign o' money!" he added, producing the ten guineas in gold.

The father and mother looked at it for a considerable time, then at each other, and shook their heads.

"Phelim!" said the father solemnly.

"Phelim!" said the mother awfully; and both shook their heads again.

"You wor never over-scrupulous," the father proceeded, "an' you know you have many little things to answer for, in the way of pickin' up what didn't belong to yourself. I think, too, you're not the same boy you wor afore you tuck to swearin' the alibies."

"Faith an' I doubt I'll have to get someone to swear an alibi for myself soon," Phelim replied.

"Why, blessed hour!" said Larry, "didn't I often tell you never to join the boys in anything that might turn out a hangin' matther?"

"If this is not a hangin' matther," said Phelim, "it's something nearly as bad: it's a marryin' matther. Sure I deluded another since you seen me last. Divil a word o' lie in it. I was clane feli in love wid this mornin' about seven o'clock."

"But how did you get the money, Phelim?"

"Why from the youthful sprig that fell in love wid me. Sure we're to be 'called' in the chapel on Sunday next."

"Why thin now, Phelim! An' who is the young craythur? for in throth she must be young to go to give the money beforehand!"

"Murdher!" exclaimed Phelim, "what's this for! Was ever anyone *done* as I am? Who is

she? Why she's—oh, murdher, oh!—she's no other than—hem—divil a one else than Father O'Hara's housekeeper, ould Biddy Doran!"

The mirth of the old couple was excessive. The father laughed till he fell off his stool, and the mother till the tears ran down her cheeks.

"Death alive, ould man, but you're very merry!" said Phelim. "If you wor my age, an' in such an amplush, you'd laugh on the wrong side o' your mouth. Maybe you'll turn your tune when you hear that she has a hundhre an' twenty guineas."

"An' you'll be rich, too," said the father. "The sprig an' you will be rich!—ha, ha, ha!"

"An' the family they'll have!" said the mother, in convulsions.

"Why, in regard o' that," said Phelim, rather nettled, "if all fails us, sure we can do as my father an' you did: kiss the Lucky Stone an' make a Station."

"Phelim, aroon," said the mother seriously, "put it out o' your head. Sure you wouldn't go to bring me a daughter-in-law oulder nor myself?"

"I'd as soon *go over*," said Phelim, "or *swing* itself before I'd marry sich a piece o' desate. Hard feedin' to her! how she did me to my face!"

Phelim then entered into a long-visaged detail of the scene at Father O'Hara's, dwelling bitterly on the alacrity with which the old housekeeper ensnared him in his own mesh.

"However," he concluded, "she'd be a sharp

one if she'd *do* me altogether. We're not married yet; an' I've a consate of my own that *she's* done for the ten guineas, anyhow!"

A family council was immediately held upon Phelim's matrimonial prospects. On coming close to the speculation of Miss Patterson, it was somehow voted, notwithstanding Phelim's *powers of attraction, to be rather a discouraging one.* Gracey Dalton was also given up. The matter was now serious, the time short, and Phelim's bounces touching his own fascinations with the sex in general were considerably abated. It was therefore resolved that he ought to avail himself of Sam Appleton's clothes until his own could be made. Sam, he said, would not press him for them immediately, inasmuch as he was under obligations to Phelim's silence upon some midnight excursions that he had made.

"Not," added Phelim, "but I'm as much, an' maybe more, in his power than he is in mine."

When breakfast was over Phelim and the father, after having determined to "drink a bottle" that night in the family of a humble young woman, named Donovan, who, they all agreed, would make an excellent wife for him, rested upon their oars until evening. In the meantime Phelim sauntered about the village, as he was in the habit of doing, whilst the father kept the day as a holiday. We have never told our readers that Phelim was in love, because in fact we know not whether he was or not. Be this as it may, we simply inform

them that in a little shed in the lower end of the village lived a person with whom Phelim was very intimate, called Foodle Flattery. He was, indeed, a man after Phelim's own heart, and Phelim was a boy after his. He maintained himself by riding country races; by handing, breeding, and feeding cocks; by fishing, poaching, and serving processes; and finally, by his knowledge as a cow-doctor and farrier—into the two last of which he had given Phelim some insight. We say the two last, for in most of the other accomplishments Phelim was fully his equal. Phelim frequently envied him his life. It was an idle, amusing, vagabond kind of existence, just such a one as he felt a relish for. This man had a daughter, rather well-looking; and it so happened that he and Phelim had frequently spent whole nights out together, no one knew on what employment. Into Flattery's house did Phelim saunter with something like an inclination to lay the events of the day before him, and to ask his advice upon his future prospects. On entering the cabin he was much surprised to find the daughter in a very melancholy mood; a circumstance which puzzled him not a little, as he knew that they lived very harmoniously together. Sally had been very useful to her father; and, if fame did not belie her, was sometimes worthy Foodle's assistant in his nocturnal exploits. She was certainly reputed to be "light handed"; an imputation which caused the young men of her acquaintance to avoid, in their casual conversations with her, any allusion to matrimony.

"Sally, achora," said Phelim, when he saw her in distress, "what's the fun? Where's your father?"

"Oh, Phelim," she replied, bursting into tears, "long runs the fox, but he's cotch at last! My father's in jail."

Phelim's jaw dropped. "In jail! *Chorp an diowol*, no!"

"It's thruth, Phelim. Curse upon this Whiteboy business, I wish it never had come into the counthry at all."

"Sally, I must see him; you know I must. But tell me how it happened? Was it at home he was taken?"

"No; he was taken this mornin' in the market. I was wid him sellin' some chickens. What'll you an' Sam Appleton do, Phelim?"

"Uz! Why, what danger is there to aither Sam or me, you darlin'?"

"I'm sure, Phelim, I don't know; but he tould me that if I was provided for he'd be firm, an' take chance of his thrial. But, he says, poor man, that it 'ud brake his heart to be thransported, lavin' me behind him wid nobody to take care o' me. He says, too, if anything 'ud make him *stag* it's fear of the thrial goin' aginst himself; for, as he said to me, what 'ud become of you, Sally, if anything happened me?"

A fresh flood of tears followed this disclosure, and Phelim's face, which was certainly destined to undergo on that day many variations of aspect, became remarkably blank.

"Sally, you insinivator, I'll hould a thousand

guineas you'd never guess what brought me here to-day?"

"Arrah, how could I, Phelim? To plan somethin' wid my fadher, maybe."

"No, but to plan somethin' wid yourself, you coaxin' jewel you. Now tell me this—Would you marry a certain gay, roguish, well-built young fellow they call Bouncin' Phelim?"

"Phelim, don't be gettin' an wid your fun now an' me in affliction. Sure, I know well you wouldn't throw yourself away upon a poor girl like me, that has nothin' but a good pair of hands to live by."

"Be my sowl, an' you live by them. Well, but set in case—supposin'—that same Bouncin' Phelim was willin' to make you misthress of the half-acre, what 'ud you be sayin'?"

"Phelim, if a body thought you worn't jokin' them—ah, the dickens go wid you, Phelim—this is more o' your thricks—but if it was thruth you wor spakin', Phelim?"

"It is thruth," said Phelim; "be the vestment, it's nothin' else. Now, say yes or no; for if it's a thing that it's to be a match, you must go an' tell him that I'll marry you, an' he must be as firm as a rock. But, see, Sally, by thim five crasses it's not bekase your father's *in* I'm marryin' you at all. Sure I'm in love wid you, acushla! Divil a lie in it. Now, yes or no?"

"Well—troth—to be sure—the sorra one, Phelim, but you have quare ways wid you. Now are you downright in airnest?"

"Be the stool I'm sittin' on!"

"Well, in the name o' Goodness, I'll go to my father an' let him know it. Poor man, it'll take the fear out of his heart. Now can he depind on you, Phelim?"

"Why, all I can say is, that we'll get ourselves called on Sunday next. Let himself, sure, send someone to autorize the priest to call us. An' now that all's settled, don't I desarve somethin'? Oh, be gorra, surely!"

"Behave, Phelim—oh—oh—Phelim, now—there you've tuck it—och, the curse o' the crows on you, see the way you have my hair down! There now, you broke my comb, too. Troth you're a wild slip, Phelim. I hope you won't be goin' on this way wid the girls when you get married."

"Is it me, you coaxer? No, faith, I'll wear a pair of winkers, for fraid o' lookin' at them at all. Oh, be gorra, no, Sally, I'll lave that to the great people. Sure, they say, the divil a differ *they* make at all."

"Go off now, Phelim, till I get ready an' set out to my father. But, Phelim, never breathe a word about him bein' in jail. No one knows it but ourselves—that is, none o' the neighbours."

"I'll sing dumb," said Phelim. "Well *bazaght lath, a rogorah*! Tell him the thruth—to be *game*, an' he'll find you an' me sweeled together whin he comes out, plase Goodness."

Phelim was but a few minutes gone when the old military cap of Fool Art projected from the little bedroom, which a wicker wall, plastered

with mud, divided from the other part of the cabin.

"Is he gone?" said Art.

"You may come out, Art," said she, "he's gone."

"Ha!" said Art triumphantly, "I often tould him, when he vexed me an' pelted me wid snow-balls, that I'd come along sides wid him yet. An' it's not over aither. Fool Art can snore when he's not asleep, an' see wid his eyes shut. Wherroo for Art!"

"But, Art, maybe he intinds to marry the housekeeper afther all?"

"Hi the cholic, the cholic!
An' ho the cholic for Phelim!"

"Then you think he won't, Art?"

"Hi the cholic, the cholic!
An' ho the cholic for Phelim!"

"Now, Art, don't say a word about my father *not* bein' in jail. He's to be back from my grandfather's in a short time, an' if we manage well you'll see what you'll get, Art—a brave new shirt, Art."

"Art has the lane for Phelim, but it's not the long one wid no turn in it. Wherroo for Art."

Phelim, on his return home, felt queer; here was a second matrimonial predicament, considerably worse than the first, into which he was hooked decidedly against his will. The

worst feature in this case was the danger to be apprehended from Foodle Flattery's disclosures, should he take it into his head to 'peach upon his brother Whiteboys. Indeed Phelim began to consider it a calamity that he ever entered into their system at all; for, on running over his exploits along with them, he felt that he was liable to be taken up any morning of the week and lodged in one of his majesty's boarding-houses. The only security he had was the honesty of his confederates; and experience took the liberty of pointing out to him many cases in which those who considered themselves quite secure, upon the same grounds, either dangled or crossed the water. He remembered, too, some prophecies that had been uttered concerning him with reference both to hanging and matrimony. Touching the former it was often said that "he'd die where the bird flies" —between heaven and earth; on matrimony, that there seldom was a swaggerer among the girls but came to the ground at last.

Now Phelim had a memory of his own, and in turning over his situation and the prophecies that had been so confidently pronounced concerning him, he felt, as we said, rather queer. He found his father and mother in excellent spirits when he got home. The good man had got a gallon of whisky on credit; for it had been agreed on not to break the ten golden guineas until they should have ascertained how the match-making would terminate that night at Donovan's.

"Phelim," said the father, "strip yourself

an' put on Sam's clo'es: you must send him down yours for a day or two; he says it's the least he may have the wearin' o' them so long as you have his."

"Right enough," said Phelim; "wid all my heart; I'm ready to make a fair swap wid him any day, for that matther."

"I sent word to the Donovans that we're to go to coort there to-night," said Larry; "so that they'll be prepared for us; an' as it would be shabby not to have a friend, I asked Sam Appleton himself. He's to folly us."

"I see," said Phelim, "I see. Well, the best boy in Europe Sam is for sich a spree. Now, fadher, you must lie like the ould *diewl* to-night. Back everything I say an' there's no fear of us. But about what she's to get, you must hould out for that. I'm to despise it, you know. I'll abuse you for spakin' about fortune, but don't budge an inch."

"It's not the first time I've done that for you, Phelim; but in regard o' these ten guineas, why you must put them in your pocket for fraid they'd be wantin' to get off wid layin' down guinea for guinea. You see, they don't think we have a rap; an' if they propose it we'll be up to them."

"Larry," observed Sheelah, "don't make a match except they give that pig they have. Hould out for that by all means."

"Tare-an'-ounze!" exclaimed Phelim, "am I goin' to take the counthry out o' the face? By the vestments, I'm a party boy! Do you know the fresh news I have for yez?"

"Not ten guineas more, Phelim?" replied the father.

"Maybe you soodhered another ould woman," said the mother.

"Be asy," replied Phelim. "No, but by the five crasses I deluded a young one since I went out!"

The old couple were once more disposed to be mirthful; but Phelim confirmed his assertion with such a multiplicity of oaths that they believed him. Nothing, however, could wring the secret of her name out of him. He had reasons for concealing it which he did not wish to divulge. In fact he could never endure ridicule, and the name of Sally Flattery, as the person whom he had "deluded", would constitute, on his part, a triumph quite as sorry as that which he had achieved in Father O'Hara's. In Ireland no man ever thinks of marrying a female thief—which Sally was strongly suspected to be—except some worthy fellow who happens to be gifted with the same propensity.

When the proper hour arrived, honest Phelim, after having already made arrangements to be called on the following Sunday, as the intended husband of two females, now proceeded with great coolness to make, if possible, a similar engagement with a third.

There is something, however, to be said for Phelim. His conquest over the housekeeper was considerably out of the common course of love affairs. He had drawn upon his invention, only to bring himself and the old woman out of the ridiculous predicament in which the priest

found them. He had, moreover, intended to prevail on her to lend him the hat in case the priest himself had refused him. He was consequently not prepared for the vigorous manner in which Mrs. Doran fastened upon the subject of matrimony. On suspecting that she was inclined to be serious, he pleaded his want of proper apparel; but here again the liberality of the housekeeper silenced him, whilst, at the same time, it opened an excellent prospect of procuring that which he most required — a decent suit of clothes. This induced him to act a part that he did not feel. He saw the old woman was resolved to outwit him, and he resolved to overreach the old woman.

His marriage with Sally Flattery was to be merely a matter of chance. If he married her at all, he knew it must be in self-defence. He felt that her father had him in his power, and that he was anything but a man to be depended on. He also thought that his being called with her, on the Sunday following, would neutralize his call with the housekeeper; just as positive and negative quantities in algebra cancel each other. But he was quite ignorant that the story of Flattery's imprisonment was merely a plan of the daughter's to induce him to marry her.

With respect to Peggy Donovan, he intended, should he succeed in extricating himself from the meshes which the other two had thrown around him, that she should be the elected one to whom he was anxious to unite himself. As to the confusion produced by being called to

three at once, he knew that, however laughable in itself, it would be precisely something like what the parish would expect from *him*. Bouncing Phelim was no common man, and to be called to three on the same Sunday would be a corroboration of his influence with the sex. It certainly chagrined him not a little that one of them was an old woman, and the other of indifferent morals; but still it exhibited the claim of three women upon one man, and that satisfied him. His mode of proceeding with Peggy Donovan was regular, and according to the usages of the country. The notice had been given that he and his father would go a-courting, and of course they brought the whisky with them, that being the custom among persons in their circumstances in life. These humble courtships very much resemble the driving of a bargain between two chapmen; for, indeed, the closeness of the demands on the one side, and the reluctance of concession on the other, are almost incredible. Many a time has a match been broken up by a refusal on the one part to give a slip of a pig or a pair of blankets or a year-old calf. These are small matters in themselves, but they are of importance to those who, perhaps, have nothing else on earth with which to begin the world.

The house to which Phelim and his father directed themselves was, like their own, of the humblest description. The floor of it was about sixteen feet by twelve; its furniture rude and scanty. To the right of the fire was a bed, the four posts of which ran up to the low roof;

it is to be remembered that the *dramatis personæ* of our story are of the humblest class.

When seven o'clock drew nigh, the inmates of this little cabin placed themselves at a clear fire; the father at one side, the mother at the other, and the daughter directly between them, knitting, for this is usually the occupation of a female on such a night. Everything in the house was clean; the floor swept; the ashes removed from the hearth; the parents in their best clothes, and the daughter also in her holiday apparel. She was a plain girl, neither remarkable for beauty nor otherwise. Her eyes, however, were good, so were her teeth, and an anxious look, produced of course by an occasion so interesting to a female, heightened her complexion to a blush that became her. The creature had certainly made the most of her little finery. Her face shone like that of a child after a fresh scrubbing with a strong towel; her hair, carefully curled with the hot blade of a knife, had been smoothed with soap until it became lustrous by repeated polishing, and her best red ribbon was tied tightly about it in a smart knot that stood out on the side of her head with something of a coquettish air. Old Donovan and his wife maintained a conversation upon some indifferent subject, but the daughter evidently paid little attention to what they said. It being near the hour appointed for Phelim's arrival, she sat with an appearance of watchful trepidation, occasionally listening, and starting at every sound that she thought bore any resemblance to a man's voice or footstep.

At length the approach of Phelim and his father was announced by a verse of a popular song, for singing which Phelim was famous:

"A sailor coorted a farmer's daughther
That lived *contagious* to the Isle of Man.
A long time coortin', an' still discoorsin'
Of things consarnin' the ocean wide;
At linth he saize: 'My own dearest darlint,
Will you consint for to be my bride?'

"An' so she did consint, the darlin', but what the puck would she do else? God save the family! Paddy Donovan, how is your health? Molly, avourneen, I'm glad to hear that you're thrivin'. An' Peggy—eh? Ah, be gorra, fadher, here's somethin' to look at! Give us the hand of you, you bloomer! Och, och! faith you're the daisey!"

"Phelim," said the father, "will you behave yourself? Haven't you the night before you for your capers? Paddy Donovan, I'm glad to see you! Molly, give us your right hand, for, in troth, I have a regard for you! Peggy, dear, how are you? But I'm sure I needn't be axin' when I look at you! In troth, Phelim, she *is* somethin' to throw your eye at."

"Larry Toole, you're welcome," replied Donovan and his wife, "an' so is your son. Take stools, both of you, an' draw near the hearth. Here, Phelim," said the latter, "draw in an' sit beside myself."

"Thank you kindly, Molly," replied Phelim; "but I'll do no sich thing. Arrah, do you think, now, that I'd begin to gosther wid an

ould woman, while I have the likes o' Peggy, the darlin', beside me? I'm up to a thrick worth nine of it. No, no; this chest'll do. Sure, you know, I must help the 'duck of diamonds' here to count her stitches."

"Paddy," said Larry, in a friendly whisper, "put this whisky past for a while, barrin' this bottle that we must taste for good luck. Sam Appleton's to come up afther us, an', I suppose, some o' your own *cleavens*'ll be here afther a while."

"Thrue for you," said Donovan. "Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin is to come over presently. But, Larry, this is nonsense. One bottle o' whisky was lashins; my Goodness, what'll we be doin' wid a whole gallon?"

"Dacency or nothin', Paddy: if it was my last I'd show sperit, an' why not? Who'd be for the shabby thing?"

"Well, well, Larry, I can't say but you're right afther all! Maybe I'd do the same thing myself, for all I'm spaking aginst it."

The old people then passed round an introductory glass, after which they chatted away for an hour or so, somewhat like the members of a committee who talk upon indifferent topics until their brethren are all assembled.

Phelim, in the meantime, grappled with the daughter, whose knitting he spoiled by hooking the thread with his finger, jogging her elbow until he ran the needles past each other, and finally unravelling her clew; all which she bore with great good-humour. Sometimes, indeed, she ventured to give him a thwack upon the

shoulder, with a laughing frown upon her countenance, in order to correct him for teasing her.

When Jemmy Burn and Antony Devlin arrived, the spirits of the party got up. The whisky was formally produced, but as yet the subject of the courtship, though perfectly understood, was not introduced. Phelim and the father were anxious to await the presence of Sam Appleton, who was considered, by the way, a first-rate hand at match-making.

Phelim, as is the wont, on finding the din of the conversation raised to the proper pitch, stole one of the bottles, and prevailed on Peggy to adjourn with him to the potato-bin. Here they ensconced themselves very snugly; but not, as might be supposed, contrary to the knowledge and consent of the seniors, who winked at each other on seeing Phelim gallantly tow her down with the bottle under his arm. It was only the common usage on such occasions, and not considered any violation whatsoever of decorum. When Phelim's prior engagements are considered, it must be admitted that there was something singularly ludicrous in the humorous look he gave over his shoulder at the company, as he went toward the bin, having the bottom of the whisky-bottle projecting behind his elbow, winking at them in return, by way of a hint to mind their own business and allow him to plead for himself. The bin, however, turned out to be rather an uneasy seat, for, as the potatoes lay in a slanting heap against the wall, Phelim and his sweet-

heart were perpetually sliding down from the top to the bottom. Phelim could be industrious when it suited his pleasure. In a few minutes those who sat about the fire imagined, from the noise at the bin, that the house was about to come about their ears.

"Phelim, you thief," said the father, "what's all that noise for?"

"*Christ avrie!*" said Molly Donovan, "is that tundher?"

"Devil carry these platees," exclaimed Phelim, raking them down with both hands and all his might, "if there's any sitting at all upon them! I'm levellin' them to prevint Peggy, the darlin', from sliddeein', an' to give us time to be talkin' somethin' lovin' to one another. The curse o' Cromwell an them! One might as well drink a glass o' whisky wid his sweetheart, or spake a tinder word to her, on the wings of a windmill as here. There now, they're as level as you plase, acushla! Sit down, you jewel you, an' give me the egg-shell, till we have our sup o' the crather in comfort. Faith, it was too soon for us to be comin' down in the world!"

Phelim and Peggy having each emptied the egg-shell, which among the poorer Irish is frequently the substitute for a glass, entered into the following sentimental dialogue, which was covered by the loud and entangled conversation of their friends about the fire, Phelim's arm lovingly about her neck, and his head laid down snugly against her cheek.

"Now, Peggy, you darlin' o' the world—

bad cess to me but I'm as glad as two ten-pennies that I levelled these piatees; there was no sittin' an them. Eh, avourneen?"

"Why, we're comfortable now, anyhow, Phelim!"

"Faith, you may say that—(a loving squeeze). Now, Peggy, begin an' tell us all about your bachelors."

"The sarra one ever I had, Phelim."

"Oh, murdher sheery, what a bounce! Bad cess to me, if you can spake a word o' thruth afther that, you common desaver! Worn't you an' Paddy Moran pullin' a coard?"

"No, in throth; it was given out on us, but we never wor, Phelim. Nothin' ever passed betune us but common civility. He thrated my father an' mother wanst to share of half a pint in the Lammas Fair, when I was along wid them; but he never broke discoorse wid me, barrin', as I sed, in civility an' friendship."

"An' do you mane to put it down my throath that you never had a sweetheart at all?"

"The nerra one."

"Oh, you thief! Wid two sich lips o' your own, an' two sich eyes o' your own, an' two sich cheeks o' your own! O, by the tarn, that won't pass."

"Well, an' supposin' I had—behave Phelim—supposin' I had, where's the harm? Sure it's well known all the sweethearts you had, an' have yet, I suppose."

"Be gorra, an' that's thruth; an' the more

the merrier, you jewel you, till one gets married. I had enough o' them, in my day, but you're the flower o' them all, that I'd like to spend my life wid"—(a squeeze).

"The sorra one word the men say a body can trust. I warrant you tould that story to every one o' them as well as to me. Stop, Phelim—it's well known that what you say to the colleens is no gospel. You know what they christened you 'Bouncin' Phelim' for."

"Betune you an' me, Peggy, I'll tell you a sacret; I *was* the boy for deludin' them. It's very well known the matches I might a' got; but you see, you little shaver, it was waitin' for yourself I was."

"For me! A purty story, indeed! I'm sure it was! Oh, afther that! Why, Phelim, how can you — Well, well, did anyone ever hear the likes?"

"Be the vestments, it's thruth. I had you in my eye these three years, but was waitin' till I'd get together as much money as 'ud set us up in the world dacently. Give me that egg-shell agin. Talkin's dhruthy work. *Shudorth, a rogarch!* an' a pleasant honeymoon to us!"

"Wait till we're marrid first, Phelim; thin it'll be time enough to dhrink *that*."

"Come, acushla, it's your turn now; taste the shell, an' you'll see how lovin' it'll make us. Mother's milk's a thrifle to it."

"Well, if I take this, Phelim, I'll not touch another dhrop to-night. In the manetime, here's whatever's best for us! Whoo! Oh,

my! but that's strong! I dunna how the people can dhrink so much of it!"

"Faith, nor me; except bekase they have a regard for it, an' that it's worth havin' a regard for, jist like yourself an' me. Upon my faix, Peggy, it bates all, the love an' likin' I have for you, an' ever had these three years past. I tould you about the eyes, mavourneen, an'—an'—about the lips—"

"Phelim—behave—I say—now stop wid you—well—well—but you're the tazin' Phelim! —Throth, the girls may be glad when you're married," exclaimed Peggy, adjusting her polished hair.

"Bad cess to the bit, if ever I got so sweet a one in my life—the soft end of a honeycomb's a fool to it. One thing, Peggy, I can tell you—that I'll love you in great style. Whin we're marrid it's I that'll soodher you up. I won't let the wind blow on you. You must give up workin', too. All I'll ax you to do will be to nurse the childher; an' that same will keep you busy enough, plase Goodness."

"Upon my faix, Phelim, you're the very sarra, so you are. Will you be asy now? I'll engage, when you're married, it'll soon be another story wid you. Maybe you'd care little about us thin!"

"Be the vestments, I'm spakin' pure gospel, so I am. Sure you don't know that to be good husbands *runs* in our family. Every one o' them was as sweet as thracle to their wives. Why, there's that ould cock, my fadher, an' if

you'd see how he butthers up the ould woman to this day, it 'ud make your heart warm to any man o' the family."

"Ould an' young was ever an' always the same to you, Phelim. Sure the ouldest woman in the parish, if she happened to be single, couldn't miss of your blarney. It's reported you're goin' to be marrid to an ould woman."

"He—hem—ahem!—Bad luck to this cowld I have! it's stickin' in my throath entirely, so it is!—hem!—to a what?"

"Why, to an ould woman, wid a great deal o' the hard goold!"

Phelim put his hand instinctively to his waistcoat-pocket, in which he carried the housekeeper's money.

"Would you oblage one wid her name?"

"You know ould Molly Kavanagh well enough, Phelim."

Phelim put up an inward ejaculation of thanks.

"To the sarra wid her, an' all sasoned women. God be praised that the night's fine, anyhow! Hand me the shell, an' we'll take a *gaulloguc* aich, an' afther that we'll begin an' talk over how lovin' an' fond o' one another we'll be."

"You're takin' too much o' the whisky, Phelim. Oh, for Goodness' sake!—oh—b—b—n—now be asy. Faix, I'll go to the fire, an' lave you altogether, so I will, if you don't give over slustherin' me, that way, an' stoppin' my breath."

"Here's all happiness to our two selves,

acushla machree! Now thry another *gauliogue*, an' you'll see how deludin' it'll make you."

"Not a sup, Phelim."

"Arrah, nonsense! Be the vestments, it's as harmless as new milk from the cow. It'll only do you good, alanna. Come now, Peggy, don't be ondacent, an' it our first night's coortin'! Blood alive! don't make little o' my father's son on sich a night, an' us at business like this, anyhow!"

"Phelim, by the crass, I won't take it; so that ends it. Do you want to make little o' me? It's not much you'd think o' me in your mind, if I'd dhrink it."

"The shell's not half full."

"I wouldn't brake my oath for all the whisky in the kingdom; so don't ax me. It's neither right nor proper of you to force it an me."

"Well, all I say is, that it's makin' little of one Phelim O'Toole, that hasn't a thought in his body but what's over head an' ears in love wid you. I must only dhrink it for you myself, thin. Here's all kinds o' good fortune to us! Now, Peggy,—sit closer to me acushla! —Now, Peggy, are you fond o' me at all? Tell thruth, now."

"Fond o' you? Sure you know all the girls is fond of you. Aren't you 'the boy for deludin' them'?—ha, ha, ha!"

"Come, come, you shaver; that won't do. Be sarious. If you knew how my heart's warmin' to you this minute, you'd fall in love wid my shadow. Come, now, out wid it.

Are you fond of a sartin boy not far from you, called Bouncin' Phelim?"

"To be sure I am. Are you satisfied now? Phelim! I say—"

"Faith, it won't pass, avourneen. That's not the voice for it. Don't you hear *me*, how tendher I spake wid my mouth brathin' into your ear, acushla machree? Now turn about, like a purty entisin' girl, as you are, an' put *your sweet bill* to my ear the same way, an' whisper what you know into it! That's a darlin'! Will you, achora?"

"An' maybe all this time you're promised to another?"

"Be the vestments, I'm not promised to one. Now! Saize the one!"

"You'll say that, anyhow!"

"Do you see my hands acrass! Be thim five crasses, I'm not promised to a girl livin', so I'm not, nor wouldn't, bekase I had you in my eye. Now will you tell me what I'm wantin' you? The grace o' heaven light down an you, an' be a good, coaxin' darlin' for wanst! Be this an' be that, if ever you heerd or seen sich doins an' times as we'll have when we're marrid. Now the weeny whispher, *a colleen dhas*!"

"It's time enough yet to let you know my mind, Phelim. If you behave yourself an' be —Why thin, is it at the bottle agin you are? Now don't dhrink so much, Phelim, or it'll get into your head. I was sayin' that if you behave yourself, an' be a good boy, I may tell you somethin' soon."

"Somethin' soon! Live horse, an' you'll get grass! Peggy, if that's the way wid you, the love's all on my side, I see clearly. Are you willin' to marry me, anyhow?"

"I'm willin' to do whatsomever my father an' mother wishes."

"*I'm* for havin' the weddin' off-hand; an' of coorse, if we agree to-night, I think our best plan is to have ourselves called on Sunday. An' I'll tell you what, avourneen,—be the holy vestments, if I was to be 'called' to fifty on the same Sunday, you're the darlin' I'd marry."

"Phelim, it's time for us to go up to the fire; we're long enough here. I thought you had only three words to say to me."

"Why, if you're tired o' me, Peggy, I don't want you to stop. I wouldn't force myself on the best girl that ever stepped."

"Sure you have tould me all you want to say, an' there's no use in us stayin' here. You know, Phelim, there's not a girl in the parish 'ud believe a word that 'ud come out o' your lips. Sure there's none o' them but you coorted one time or other. If you could get betther, Phelim, I dunna whether you'd be here to-night at all or not."

"Answer me this, Peggy. What do you think your father 'ud be willin' to give you? Not that I care a *crona baun* about it, for I'd marry you wid an inch of candle."

"You know my father's but a poor man, Phelim, an' can give little or nothin'. Them that won't marry me as I am, needn't come here to look for a fortune."

"I have the Peggy, and he the same when I want an answer to all, will you be yourself, Phillip?" In the meantime, to show you that I will get a thousand for a little time, I will have a mile wall a hundred and twenty guineas."

Peggy received this intelligence much in the same manner as Lady and Sheila had received it. The mind was absolutely bewildered for an hour or minutes. Indeed, so did he it have that Lady and her father could not help asking:

"Lord, what's the fine, Peggy, mother?"

"Oh, mother," she replied, "has not Phillip's horses."

"Why," said Phillip, "you won't believe me. Be it the horse—"

Peggy's mind pursued his mode from being heard. In vain he declared, protested and swore. On the morrow he was compelled to acquiesce in the possession of the horse. Even such, from his lips, was indeed upon as disabled.

Phillip, in doing this he could neither resist the Peggy's remonstrances of love, or make himself mention upon the subject of the large fortune, for that he had nothing for it, or, in order to produce an impression, but the pretend.

"Well," said he, "you may have me, Peggy, subject of you like, but not if this is not before and a blessing, all I say my sister, if I would." Some day we will marry, if the star will comply." On another day, this

night! Isn't it a poor case entirely, that the girl I'd suffer myself to be turned inside out for, won't say that she cares about a hair o' my head! Oh, thin, but I'm the misfortunate blackguard all out! Och, oh! Peggy, achora, you'll break my heart! Hand me that shell, acushla—for I'm in the height of affliction!"

Peggy could neither withhold it, nor reply to him. Her mirth was even more intense now than before; nor, if all were known, was Phelim less affected with secret laughter than Peggy.

"Is it makin' fun o' me you are, you thief, eh?—Is it laughin' at my grief you are?" exclaimed Phelim. "Be the tarn o' war, I'll punish you for that."

Peggy attempted to escape, but Phelim succeeded, ere she went, in taking a salutation or two, after which both joined those who sat at the fire, and in a few minutes Sam Appleton entered.

Much serious conversation had already passed in reference to the courtship, which was finally entered into and debated, *pro* and *con*.

"Now, Paddy Donovan, that we're all together, let me tell you one thing, there's not a betther nathur'd boy, nor a stouther, claner young fellow in the parish, than *my* Phelim. He'll make your daughther as good a husband as ever broke bread!"

"I'm not sayin' aginst that, Larry. He *is* a good nathur'd boy: but I tell you, Larry O'Toole, that *my* daughther's his fill of a wife any day. An' I'll put this to the back o' that

—she's a hard-workin' girl, that ates no idle bread."

"Very right," said Sam Appleton. "Phelim's a hairo, an' she's a beauty. Dang me, but they wor made for one another. Phelim, abouchal, why don't you—oh, I see you are! Why, I was goin' to bid you make up to her."

"Give no gosther, Sam," replied Phelim, "but sind round the bottle, an' don't forget to let it come this way. I hardly tasted a dhrop to-night."

"Oh, Phelim!" exclaimed Peggy.

"Whisht!" said Phelim, "there's no use in lettin' the ould fellows be committin' sin. Why, they're *hearty* as it is, the sinners."

"Come, nabours," said Burn, "I'm the boy that's for close work. How does the match stand? You're both my friends, an' may this be poison to me, but I'll spake like an honest man, for the one as well as for the other."

"Well, then," said Donovan, "how is Phelim to support my daughther, Larry? Sure that's a fair questin, anyway."

"Why, Paddy," replied Larry, "when Phelim gets her, he'll have a patch of his own, as well as another. There's that half acre, and a betther piece o' land isn't in Europe!"

"Well, but what plenishin' are they to have, Larry? A bare half acre's but a poor look up."

"I'd as soon you'd not make little of it, in the manetime," replied Larry rather warmly. "As good a couple as ever they wor, lived on

the hillsides dotted with what they earned by hard work otherwise.

"I'm not disposed to learn I'd be long sorry too about the business," said Denis, "but to begin the world with."

"What are they?" said Denis, "go to the same will fall. What do they want to move nor other young people like them to begin the world with? Are you going to make English or Scotch of them, that never names in charge also to put a farm and stock in the nights also to my hand an English 'ed. Or the boys of them will be that English 'ed left a Dublin an' Peter left and indeed, hasn't new-married couples in Ireland, what most would with? Some they're off worse nor a thousand others."

"Stress, Jeremy," said Phelim; "there's your health for them."

"God be thanked, they have health, Denis," said Dorcas. "Sure, Jeremy, I'd like that they'd have something more." Observed Jeremy, Phelim spake up for remedy like for the column: "What will you do to the ol' boys? Don't like but Ireland."

"I'm not spake to it I know it, Dorcas is to appear," said Dorcas. "I don't think he has a right to be also." Anything will do a girl as my Peter."

"Hush, my Dorcas," said Phelim. "She's a good woman, though, but to the think she's above anyone. Sure, makes the name of O'Toole upon them? I'll be bet miscarrie for you dorcas be so."

well settled. *My* Phelim will have one-half o' my worldly goods, at all evints."

"Name them, Larry, if you plase."

"Why, he'll have one o' the goats; the grey one, for she's the best o' the two, in throth. He'll have two stools; three hens, an' a toss-up for the cock. The biggest o' the two pots; two good crocks; three good wooden trenchers, an—hem—he'll have his own—I say, Paddy, are you listenin' to me?—Phelim, do you hear what I'm givin' you, *a veehonee?—his own bed!* An' there's all I can or will do for him. Now do you spake up for Peggy."

"I'm to have my own bedstead too," said Phelim, "an' bad cess to the stouter one in Europe. It's as good this minute as it was eighteen years agone."

"Paddy Donovan, spake up," said Larry.

"Spake up!" said Paddy contemptuously. "Is it for three crowns' worth I'd spake up? The bedstead, Phelim! *Bedhu husth*, man!"

"Put round the bottle," said Phelim, "we're dhry here."

"Thrue enough, Phelim," said the father. "Paddy, here's towarst you an' yours—nabours—all your healths—young couple! Paddy, give us your hand, man alive! Sure, whether we agree or not, this won't put between us."

"Throth it won't, Larry—an' I'm thankful to you. Your health, Larry, an' all your healths! Phelim an' Peggy, success to yez, whether or not! An' now, in regard o' your civility, I *will* spake up. My proposal is this: I'll put down guinea for guinea wid you."

Now we must observe, by the way, that this was said under the firm conviction that neither Phelim nor the father had a guinea in their possession.

"I'll do that same, Paddy," said Larry; "but I'll lave it to the present company if you're not bound to put down the *first* guinea. Nabours, amn't I right?"

"You are right, Larry" said Burn, "it's but fair that Paddy should put down the first."

"Molly, achora," said Donovan to the wife, who, by the way, was engaged in preparing the little feast usual on such occasions—"Molly, achora, give me that ould glove you have in your pocket."

She immediately handed him an old shammy glove, tied up into a hard knot, which he felt some difficulty in unloosing.

"Come, Larry," said he, laying down a guinea-note, "cover that like a man."

"Phelim carries my purse," observed the father; but he had scarcely spoken when the laughter of the company rang loudly through the house. The triumph of Donovan appeared to be complete, for he thought the father's allusion to Phelim tantamount to an evasion.

"Phelim! Phelim carries it! Faix, an' I doubt he finds it a light burdyeen."

Phelim approached in all his glory.

"What am I to do?" he enquired with a swagger.

"You're to cover that guinea-note wid a guinea, if you can," said Donovan.

"Whether 'ud you prefar goold or notes,"

said Phelim, looking pompously about him; "that's the talk."

This was received with another merry peal of laughter.

"Oh, goold— goold by all manes!" replied Donovan.

"Here goes the goold, my worthy," said Phelim, laying down his guinea with a firm slap upon the table.

Old Donovan seized it, examined it, then sent it round, to satisfy himself that it was a *bonâ fide* guinea.

On finding that it was good, he became blank a little; his laugh lost its strength, much of his jollity was instantly neutralized, and his face got at least two inches longer. Larry now had the laugh against him, and the company heartily joined in it.

"Come, Paddy," said Larry, "go an!—ha, ha, ha!"

Paddy fished for half a minute through the glove; and, after what was apparently a hard chase, brought up another guinea, which he laid down.

"Come, Phelim!" said he, and his eye brightened again with a hope that Phelim would fail.

"Good agin!" said Phelim, thundering down another, which was instantly subjected to a similar scrutiny.

"You'll find it good," said Larry. "I wish we had a sackful o' them. Go an, Paddy. Go an, man, who's afeard?"

"Sowl, I'm done," said Donovan, throwing

down the purse with a hearty laugh—"give me your hand, Larry. Be the goold afore us, I thought to do you. Sure these two guineas is for my rint, an' we mustn't let them come atween us at all."

"Now," said Larry, "to let you see that my son's not widout something to begin the world wid—Phelim, shill out the rest o' the yallow boys."

"Faix, you ought to dhrink the ould woman's health for this," said Phelim. "Poor ould crathur, many a long day she was savin' up these for me. It's my mother I'm speakin' about."

"An' we will, too," said the father; "here's *Sheelah's* health, neighbours! The best poor man's wife that ever *threwn* a gown over her shouldhers."

This was drunk with all the honours, and the negotiation proceeded.

"Now," said Appleton, "what's to be done? Paddy, say what you'll do for the girl."

"Money's all talk," said Donovan; "I'll give the girl the two-year ould heifer—an' that's worth double what his father has promised Phelim; I'll give her a stone o' flax, a decent suit o' clo'es, my blessin'—an' there's her fortune."

"Has she neither bed nor beddin'?" enquired Larry.

"Why, don't you say that Phelim's to have his own bed?" observed Donovan. "Sure one bed'll be plinty for them."

"I don't care a damn about fortune," said

Phelim, for the first time taking a part in the bargain—"so long as I get the darlin' herself. But I think there 'ud be no harm in havin' a spare pair o' blankets—an', for that matther, a bedstead, too—in case a friend came to see a body."

"I don't much mind givin' you a *brother* to the bedstead you have, Phelim," replied Donovan, winking at the company, for he was perfectly aware of the nature of Phelim's bedstead.

"I'll tell you what you must do," said Larry, "otherwise I'll not stand it. Give the colleen a chaff bed, blankets an' all other parts complate, along wid that slip of a pig. If you don't do this, Paddy Donovan, why, we'll finish the whisky an' part friends—but it's no match."

"I'll never do it, Larry. The bed an' beddin' I'll give; but the pig I'll by no manner o' manes part wid."

"Put round the bottle," said Phelim, "we're gettin' dhry agin—sayin' nothin' is dhroothy work. Ould man, will you not bother us about fortune!"

"Come, Paddy Donovan," said Devlin, "dang it, let out a little, considher he has ten guineas; an' I give it as my downright maxim an' opinion that he's fairly entitled to the pig."

"You're welcome to give your opinion, Antony, an' I'm welcome not to care a rotten sthraw about it. *My* daughter's wife enough for him, widout a gown to her back, if he had his ten guineas doubled."

"An' *my* son," said Larry, "is husband enough for a betther girl nor ever called you father—not makin' little, at the same time, of either you or her."

"Paddy," said Burn, "there's no use in spakin' that way. I agree wid Antony, that you ought to throw in the 'slip'."

"Is it what I have to pay my next gale o' rint wid? No, no! If he won't marry her widout it, she'll get as good that will."

"Saize the 'slip'," said Phelim, "the darlin' herself here is all the slip I want."

"But I'm not so," said Larry, "the 'slip' must go in, or it's a brake off. Phelim can get girls that has money enough to buy us all out o' root. Did you hear *that*, Paddy Donovan?"

"I hear it," said Paddy, "but I'll b'lieve as much of it as I like."

Phelim apprehended that as his father got warm with the liquor, he might, in vindicating the truth of his own assertion, divulge the affair of the old housekeeper.

"Ould man," said he, "have sinse, an' pass that over, if you have any regard for Phelim."

"I'd not be brow-bate into anything," observed Donovan.

"Sowl, you would not," said Phelim; "for my part, Paddy, I'm ready to marry your daughter (a squeeze to Peggy) widout a ha'p'orth at all, barrin' herself. It's the girl I want, an' not the slip."

"Thin, be the book, you'll get both, Phelim, for your dacency," said Donovan; "but, you

sobriety on the part of Sam would leave himself more liquor. Phelim, therefore, drank for them both, and that to such excess that Larry, by Appleton's advice, left him at his father's, in consequence of his inability to proceed homewards. It was not, however, without serious trouble that Appleton could get Phelim and the father separated; and when he did, Larry's grief was bitter in the extreme. By much entreaty, joined to some vigorous shoves towards the door, he was prevailed upon to depart without him; but the old man compensated for the son's absence by indulging in the most vociferous sorrow, as he went along, about "*his* Phelim". When he reached home, his grief burst out afresh; he slapped the palms of his hands together, and indulged in a continuous howl that one on hearing it would imagine to be the very echo of misery. When he had fatigued himself, he fell asleep on the bed, without having undressed, where he lay until near nine o'clock the next morning. Having got up and breakfasted, he related to his wife, with an aching head, the result of the last night's proceedings. Everything, he assured her, was settled; Phelim and Peggy were to be called the following Sunday, as Phelim, he supposed, had already informed her.

"Where's Phelim?" said the wife; "an' why didn't he come home wid you last night?"

"Where is Phelim? Why, Sheelah, woman, sure he *did* come home wid me last night."

"*Chrush orrin*, Larry, no! What could happen him? Why, man, I thought you knew where he was; an' in regard of his bein' abroad so often at night, myself didn't think it sthrange."

Phelim's absence astounded them both, particularly the father, who had altogether forgotten everything that had happened on the preceding night, after the period of his intoxication. He proposed to go back to Donovan's to enquire for him, and was about to proceed there when Phelim made his appearance, dressed in his own tender apparel only. His face was three inches longer than usual, and the droop in his eye remarkably conspicuous.

"No fear of him," said the father: "here's himself. Arrah, Phelim, what became of you last night? Where wor you?"

Phelim sat down very deliberately and calmly, looked dismally at his mother, and then looked more dismally at his father.

"I suppose you're sick too, Phelim," said the father. "*My* head's goin' round like a top."

"Ate your breakfast," said his mother; "it's the best thing for you."

"Where wor you last night, Phelim?" enquired the father.

"What are you sain', ould man?"

"Who wor you wid last night?"

"Do, Phelim," said the mother, "tell us, aroon. I hope it wasn't *cat* you wor. Tell us, avourneen?"

"Ould woman, what are you talkin' about?"

Phelim whistled "*aliam dhu ch*", or "the

song of sorrow". At length he bounced to his feet, and exclaimed in a loud, rapid voice:

"*Ma chuirp an diouol!* ould couple, but I'm robbed of my ten guineas by Sam Appleton!"

"Robbed by Sam Appleton! Heavens above!" exclaimed the father.

"Robbed by Sam Appleton! *Gra machree*, Phelim! no, you aren't!" exclaimed the mother.

"*Gra machree yourself!* but I say I am," replied Phelim; "robbed clane of every penny of it!"

Phelim then sat down to breakfast—for he was one of those happy mortals whose appetite is rather sharpened by affliction—and immediately related to his father and mother the necessity which Appleton's connection had imposed on him of leaving the country; adding, that while he was in a state of intoxication, he had been stripped of Appleton's clothes; that his own were left beside him; that when he awoke the next morning, he found his borrowed suit gone; that on searching for his own, he found to his misery that the ten guineas had disappeared along with Appleton, who, he understood from his father, had "left the neighbourhood for a while, till the throuble he was in 'ud pass over."

"But I know where he's gone," said Phelim, "an' may the divil's luck go wid him, an' God's curse on the day I ever had anything to do wid that hell-fire Ribbon business! 'Twas he first brought me into it, the villain; an' now I'd give the townland we're in to be fairly out of it."

"*Hanim an diouol!*" said the father, "is the ten guineas gone? The curse of hell upon him, for a black desaver! Where's the villain, Phelim?"

"He's gone to America," replied the son. "The divil tare the tongue out o' myself, too! I should be puttin' him up to go there, an' to get money, if it was to be had. The villain bit me fairly."

"Well, but how are we to manage?" enquired Larry. "What's to be done?"

"Why," said the other, "to bear it, an' say nothin'. Even if he was in his father's house, the double-faced villain has me so much in his power that I couldn't say a word about it. My curse on the Ribbon business, I say, from my heart out!"

That day was a miserable one to Phelim and the father. The loss of the ten guineas, and the feverish sickness produced from their debauch, rendered their situation not enviable. Some other small matters, too, in which Phelim was especially concerned, independent of the awkward situation in which he felt himself respecting the three calls on the following day, which was Sunday, added greater weight to his anxiety. He knew not how to manage, especially upon the subject of his habiliments, which certainly were in a very dilapidated state. An Irishman, however, never despairs. If he has not apparel of his own sufficiently decent to wear on his wedding-day, he borrows from a friend. Phelim and his father remembered that there were several neighbours in the

village who would oblige him with a suit for the wedding; and as to the other necessary expenses, they did what their countrymen are famous for—they trusted to chance.

"We'll work ourselves out of it some way," said Larry. "Sure, if all fails us, we can sell the goats for the weddin' expenses. It's one comfort that Paddy Donovan must find the dinner; an' all *we* have to get is the whisky, the marriage money, an' some other thrifles."

"They say," observed Phelim, "that people have more luck whin they're married than whin they're single. I'll have a bout at the marriage, so I will; for worse luck I can't have, if I had half a dozen wives, than I always met wid."

"I'll go down," observed Larry, "to Paddy Donovan's an' send him to the priest's to *give in* your names to be called to-morrow. Faith, it's well that you won't have to appear, or I dunna how you'd get over it."

"No," said Phelim, "that bill won't pass. You must go to the priest yourself, an' see the curate: if you go near Father O'Hara, it 'ud knock a plan on the head that I've invinted. I'm in the notion that I'll make the ould woman bleed agin. I'll squeeze as much out of her as 'ill bring me to America, for I'm not overly safe here, or, if all fails, I'll marry her, an' run away wid the money. It 'ud bring us all *acrass*."

Larry's interview with the curate was but a short one. He waited on Donovan, however, before he went, who expressed himself

satisfied with the arrangement, and looked forward to the marriage as certain. As for Phelim, the idea of being called to three females at the same time was one that tickled his vanity very much. Vanity, where the fair sex was concerned, had been always his predominant failing. He was not finally determined on marriage with any of them; but he knew that should he even escape the three, the *éclat* resulting from so celebrated a transaction would recommend him to the sex for the remainder of his life. Impressed with this view of the matter, he sauntered about as usual; saw Foodle Flattery's daughter, and understood that her uncle had gone to the priest, to have his niece and worthy Phelim called the next day. But besides this hypothesis, Phelim had another, which, after all, was the real one. He hoped that the three applications would prevent the priest from calling him at all.

The priest, who possessed much sarcastic humour, on finding the name of Phelim come in as a candidate for marriage honours with three different women, felt considerably puzzled to know what he could be at. That Phelim might hoax one or two of them was very probable, but that he should have the effrontery to make *him* the instrument of such an affair he thought a little too bad.

"Now," said he to his curate, as they talked the matter over that night, "it is quite evident that this scapegrace reckons upon our refusal to call him with *any* of those females to-morrow. It is also certain that not one of the three

to whom he has pledged himself is aware that he is under similar obligations to the other two."

"How do you intend to act, sir?" enquired the curate.

"Why," said Mr. O'Hara, "certainly to call him to each: it will give the business a turn for which he is not prepared. He will stand exposed, moreover, before the congregation, and that will be some punishment to him."

"I don't know as to the punishment," replied the curate. "If ever a human being was free from shame, Phelim is. The fellow will consider it a joke."

"Very possible," observed his superior; "but I am anxious to punish this old woman. It may prevent her from uniting herself with a fellow who certainly would, on becoming master of her money, immediately abandon her—perhaps proceed to America."

"It will also put the females of the parish on their guard against him," said the innocent curate, who knew not that it would raise him highly in their estimation. "We will have a scene, at all events," said Mr. O'Hara; "for I'm resolved to expose him. No blame can be attached to those whom he has duped, excepting only the old woman, whose case will certainly excite a great deal of mirth. That matters not, however; she has earned the ridicule, and let her bear it."

It was not until Sunday morning that the three calls occurred to Phelim in a new light.

He forgot that the friends of the offended parties might visit upon his proper carcase the contumely he offered to them. This, however, did not give him much anxiety, for Phelim was never more in his element than when entering upon a row.

The Sunday in question was fine, and the congregation unusually large: one would think that all the inhabitants of the parish of Teernarogarah had been assembled. Most of them certainly were.

The priest, after having gone through the usual ceremonies of the Sabbath worship, excepting those with which he concludes the mass, turned round to the congregation, and thus addressed them:

"I would not," said he, "upon any other occasion of this kind, think it necessary to address you at all; but this is one perfectly *unique*, and in some degree patriarchal, because, my friends, we are informed that it was allowed in the times of Abraham and his successors, to keep more than one wife. This custom is about being revived by a modern, who wants, in rather a barefaced manner, to palm himself upon us as a patriarch. And who do you think, my friends, this Irish patriarch is? Why, no other than bouncing Phelim O'Toole!"

This was received precisely as the priest anticipated: loud were the shouts of laughter from all parts of the congregation.

"Divil a fear o' Phelim!" they exclaimed. "He wouldn't be himself, or he'd kick up a dust some way."

"Blessed Phelim! Just like him! Faith, he couldn't be marrid in the common coorse!"

"Arrah, whisht till we hear the name o' the happy crathur that's to be blisthered with Phelim! The darlin's in luck, whoever she is, an' has gained a blessed prize in the 'Bouncer'."

"This bouncing patriarch," continued the priest, "has made his selection with great judgment and discrimination. In the first place, he has pitched upon a hoary damsel of long standing in the world;—one blessed with age and experience. She is qualified to keep Phelim's house well, as soon as it shall be built; but whether she will be able to keep Phelim himself, is another consideration. It is not unlikely that Phelim, in imitation of his great prototypes, may prefer living in a tent. But whether she keeps Phelim or the house, one thing is certain, that Phelim will keep her money. Phelim selected this aged woman, we presume, for her judgment; for surely she who has given such convincing proof of discretion, must make a useful partner to one who, like Phelim, has that virtue yet to learn. I have no doubt, however, but in a short time he will be as discreet as his teacher."

"Blood alive! Isn't that fine language?"

"You may say that! Begad, it's himself *can* discoorse! What's the Protestants to that?"

"The next upon the list is one who, though a poor man's daughter, will certainly *bring property* to Phelim. There is also an aptness in

this selection which does credit to the 'Patriarch.' Phelim is a great dancer, an accomplishment with which we do not read that the patriarchs themselves were possessed; although we certainly do read that a light heel was of little service to Jacob. Well, Phelim carries a light heel, and the second female of his choice on this list carries a 'light hand'; it is, therefore, but natural to suppose that, if ever they are driven to extremities, they will make light of many things which other people would consider as of weighty moment. Whether Phelim and she may long remain stationary in this country, is a problem more likely to be solved at the county assizes than here. It is not improbable that his Majesty may recommend the 'Patriarch' and one of his wives to try the benefit of a voyage to New South Wales, he himself graciously vouchsafing to bear their expenses."

"Divil a lie in that, anyhow! If ever anyone crossed the wather, Phelim will. Can't his reverence be funny whin he plases?"

"Many a time it was prophecized for him; an' his reverence knows best."

"Begad, Phelim's gettin' over the coals. But sure it's all the way the father an' mother reared him."

"Tunder-an'-turf, is he goin' to be called to a pair o' them?"

"Faix, so it seems."

"Oh, the divil's clip! Is he mad? But let us hear it out."

"The third damsel is by no means so well

she'll 'bring him property' sure enough, as his reverence says."

"I also publish the banns of matrimony between Phelim O'Toole—whom we must in future call the 'Patriarch'—of Teernarogarah, and Peggy Donovan of the same place. If any of you knows any impediment in the way of their marriage, you are bound to declare it."

"Bravo! Phelim acushla. 'Tis you that's the blessed youth. Tundher-an'-whisky, did ever any body hear of sich desate? To do three o' them. Be sure the Bouncer has some schame in this. Well, one would suppose Paddy Donovan an' his daughter had more sinse nor to think of sich a runnagate as Bouncin' Phelim."

"No, but the Pathriark! Sure his reverence sez that we mustn't call him anything agin but the Pathriark! Oh, be gorra, that's the name! —ha, ha, ha!"

When the mirth of the congregation had subsided and their comments ended, the priest concluded in the following words:—

"Now, my friends, here is such a piece of profligacy as I have never, in the whole course of my pastoral duties, witnessed. It is the act of Phelim O'Toole, be it known, who did not scruple to engage himself for marriage to three females—that is, to two girls and an old woman —and who, in addition, had the effrontery to send me his name and theirs, to be given out all on the same Sunday; thus making *me* an instrument in his hands to hoax those who trusted in his word. That he can marry but

one of them is quite clear; but that he would not scruple to marry the three, and three more to complete the half dozen, is a fact which no one who knows him will doubt. For my part I know not how this business may terminate. Of a truth he has contrived to leave the claims of the three females in a state of excellent confusion. Whether it raise or lessen him in their opinion I cannot pretend to determine. I am sorry for Donovan's daughter, for I know not what greater calamity could befall any honest family than a matrimonial union with Phelim O'Toole. I trust that this day's proceedings will operate as a caution to the females of the parish against such an unscrupulous reprobate. It is for this purpose only that I publish the names given in to me. His character was pretty well known before; it is now established; and having established it, I dismiss the subject altogether."

Phelim's fame was now nearly at its height. Never before had such a case been known; yet the people somehow were not so much astonished as might be supposed. On the contrary, had Phelim's courtship gone off like that of another man, they would have felt more surprised. We need scarcely say that the "giving out" or "calling" of Phelim and the three damsels was spread over the whole parish before the close of that Sunday. Everyone had it—man, woman, and child. It was told, repeated, and improved as it went along. New circumstances were added, fresh points made out, and other *dramatis personæ* brought in—all

garden. You know the family's goin' up to Dublin on Thursday, Art, an' they're gettin' their washin' done in time to be off. Go down, but don't let anyone see you; take the third shirt on the row, an' bring it up to me till I smooth it for you."

Art sallied down to the hedge on which the linen had been put out to dry, and having reconnoitred the premises, shrugged himself, and cast a longing eye on the third shirt. With that knavish penetration, however, peculiar to such persons, he began to reflect that Sally might have some other object in view besides *his* accommodation. He determined, therefore, to proceed upon new principles — sufficiently safe, he thought, to protect him from the consequences of theft.

"Good-morrow, Bush," said Art, addressing that on which the third shirt was spread. "Isn't it a burnin' shame an' a sin for you," he continued, "to have sich a fine white shirt an you, an' me widout a stitch to my back. Will you swap?"

Having waited until the bush had due time to reply,

"Sorra fairer," he observed; "silence gives consint."

In less than two minutes he stripped, put on one of the Squire's best shirts, and spread out his own dusky fragment in its place.

"It's a good thing," said Art, "to have a clear conscience; a fair exchange is no robbery."

Now, it so happened that the Squire himself, who was a humorist and also a justice of the

peace, saw Art putting his morality in practice at the hedge. He immediately walked out with an intention of playing off a trick upon the fool for his dishonesty; and he felt the greater inclination to do this in consequence of an opinion long current, that Art, though he had outwitted several, had never been outwitted himself.

Art had been always a welcome guest in the Squire's kitchen, and never passed the "Big House", as an Irish country gentleman's residence is termed, without calling. On this occasion, however, he was too cunning to go near it—a fact which the Squire observed. By taking a short cut across one of his own fields he got before Art, and turning the angle of a hedge, met him trotting along at his usual pace.

"Well, Art, where now?"

"To the crass roads, your honour."

"Art, is not this a fine place of mine? Look at these groves, and the lawn, and the river there, and the mountains behind all. Is it not equal to Sir William R——'s?" Sir William was Art's favourite patron.

"Sir William, your honour, has all this at his place."

"But I think my views are finer."

"They're fine enough," replied Art; "*but where's the lake before the door?*"

The Squire said no more about his prospects.

"Art," he continued, "would you carry a letter for me to M——?"

"I'll be wantin' somethin' to dhrink on the way," said Art.

"You shall get something to eat and dhrink

before you go," said the Squire, "and half a crown for your trouble."

"Augh," exclaimed Art, "be dodda, sir, you're nosed like Sir William, and chinned like Captain Taylor." This was always Art's compliment when pleased.

The Squire brought him up to the house, ordered him refreshment, and while Art partook of it, wrote a letter or mittimus to the county jailer, authorizing him to detain the bearer in prison until he should hear further from him.

Art, having received the half-crown and the letter, appeared delighted; but on hearing the name of the person to whom it was addressed, he smelt a trick. He promised faithfully, however, to deliver it, and betrayed no symptoms whatever of suspicion. After getting some distance from the big house he set his wits to work, and ran over in his mind the names of those who had been most in the habit of annoying him. At the head of this list stood Phelim O'Toole, and on Phelim's head did he resolve to transfer the revenge, which the Squire, he had no doubt, intended to take on himself.

With considerable speed he made way to Larry O'Toole's, where such a scene presented itself as made him for a moment forget the immediate purport of his visit.

Opposite Phelim, dressed out in her best finery, stood the housekeeper, zealously insisting on either money or marriage. On one side of him stood old Donovan and his daughter, whom he had forced to come, in the character of a witness, to support his charges against the

pan deceiver. On the other were ranged Sally Flattery, in tears, and her uncle in wrath, each ready to pounce upon Phelim.

Phelim stood the very emblem of patience and good-humour. When one of them attacked him, he winked at the other two; when either of the other two came on, he winked still at those who took breath. Sometimes he trod on his father's toe, lest the old fellow might lose the joke, and not unfrequently proposed their going to a public-house, and composing their differences over a bottle, if any of them would pay the expenses.

"What do you mane to do?" said the housekeeper; "but it's asy known I'm an unprojected woman or I wouldn't be thrated as I am. If I had relations livin' or near me, we'd pay you on the bones, for bringin' me to shame and scandal, as you have done."

"Upon my *sanies*, Mrs. Doran, I feel for your situation, so I do," said Phelim. "You've outlived all your friends, an' if it was in my power to bring any o' them back to you I'd do it."

"Oh, you desaver, is that the feelin' you have for me, when I thought you'd be a guard an' a projection to me? You know I have the money, you sconce, an' how comfortable it 'ud keep us, if you'd only see what's good for you. You blarnied an' palavered me, you villain! till you gained my infections, an' thin you tuck the cholic as an excuse to lave me in a state of dissolution an' disparagement. You promised to marry me, an' you had no notion of it."

"You're not the only one he has disgraced, Mrs. Doran," said Donovan. "A purty way he came down, himself an' his father, undher pretence of coortin' my daughther. He should lay down his ten guineas, too, to show us what he had to begin the world wid, the villain!—an' him had no notion of it aither."

"An' he should send this girl to make me go to the priest to have him and her called, the reprobate!" said Nick Flattery; "an' him had no notion of it aither."

"Sure he sent us all there," exclaimed Donovan.

"He did," said the old woman.

"Not a doubt of it," observed Flattery.

"Ten guineas!" said the housekeeper. "An' so you brought my ten guineas in your pocket to coort another girl! Aren't you a right profligate?"

"Yes," said Donovan, "aren't you a right profligate?"

"Answer the dacent people," said Flattery; "aren't you a right profligate?"

"Take the world asy, all of ye," replied Phelim. "Mrs. Doran, there was three of you called, sure enough; but, be the vestments, I intinded—do you hear me, Mrs. Doran? Now have rason—I say, do *you* hear me? Be the vestments, I intinded to marry only *one* of you; an' that I'll do still, except I'm vexed—(a wink at the old woman). Yet you're all flyin' at me, as if I had three heads or three tails upon me."

"Maybe the poor boy's not so much to blame," said Mrs. Doran. "There's hussies

in this world," and here she threw an angry eye upon the other two, "that 'ud give a man no pace till he'd promise to marry them."

"Why did he promise to them that didn't want him thin?" exclaimed Donovan. "I'm not angry that he didn't marry my daughther—for I wouldn't give her to him now—but I am at the slight he put an her."

"Paddy Donovan, did *you* hear what I said jist now?" replied Phelim. "I wish to Jamini some people 'ud have sinse! Be them five crasses, I know thim I intinded to marry, as well as I do where I'm standin'. That's plain talk, Paddy. I'm sure the world's not past yet, I hope"—(a wink at Paddy Donovan).

"An' wasn't he a big rascal to make little of my brother's daughther as he did?" said Flattery; "but he'll rub his heels together for the same act."

"Nick Flatthery, do you think I could marry three wives? Be that horseshoe over the door, Sally Flatthery, you didn't thrate me dacent. She did not, Nick; an' you ought to know that it was wrong of her to come here to-day."

"Well, but what do you intind to do, Phelim, avourn—you profligate?" said the half-angry, half-pacified housekeeper, who, being the veteran, always led on the charge.

"Why, I intend to marry *one* of you," said Phelim. "I say, Mrs. Doran, do you see thim ten fingers acrass—be thim five crasses I'll do what I said, if nothing happens to put it aside."

"Then be an honest man," said Flattery, "an' tell us which o' them you *will* marry."

"Nick, don't you know I always regarded *your* family. If I didn't that I may never do an ill turn! Now! But some people can't see anything. Arra, tundher-an-whisky, man, would you expect me to tell out before all that's here who I'll marry—to be hurtin' the feelin's of the rest. Faith, I'll never do a shabby thing."

"What rekimpinse will you make *my* daughter for bringin' down her name afore the whole parish, along wid them she oughtn't to be named in the one day wid?" said Donovan.

"An' who is that, Paddy Donovan?" said the housekeeper with a face of flame.

"None of your broad hints, Paddy," said Nick. "If it's a collusion to Sally Flattery you mane, take care I don't make you ate your words."

"Paddy," exclaimed Phelim, "you oughtn't to be hurtin' their feelin's!"—(a friendly wink to Paddy).

"If you mane me," said the housekeeper, "by the crook on the fire I'd lave you a mark."

"I mane you for one, thin, since you provoke me," replied Donovan.

"For *one*, is it?" said Nick; "an' who's the other, i' you plase?"

"Your brother's daughter," he replied. "Do you think I'd *even* my daughter to a thief?"

"Be gorra," observed Phelim, "that's too provokin', an' what I wouldn't bear. Will ye keep the pace, I say, till I spake a word to Mrs. Doran? Mrs. Doran, can I have a word or two wid you outside the house?"

"To be sure you can," she replied. "I'd give you fair play if the *diouel* was in you."

Phelim accordingly brought her out, and thus accosted her:

"Now, Mrs. Doran, you think I thrated you ondacent; but do you see that book?" said he, producing a book of ballads, on which he had sworn many a similar oath before; "be the contints o' that book, as sure as you're beside me, it's *you* I intind to marry! These other two—the curse o' the crows upon them! I wish we could get them from about the place—is both dyin' for love o' me, an' I surely did promise to get myself *called* to them. They wanted it to be a promise of marriage; but, says I, 'sure if we're called together it's the same, for whin it comes to that, all's right,—an' so I tould both o' them, unknownst to one another. Arra, be my sowl, you'd make two like them, so you would; an' if you hadn't a penny I'd marry you afore aither o' them to-morrow. Now, there's the whole sacret, an' don't be onaisy about it. Tell Father O'Hara how it is whin you go home, an' that he must call the three o' you to me agin, on next Sunday, and the Sunday afther, plase Goodness; jist that I may keep my promise to them. You know I couldn't have luck or grace if I marrid you wid the sin of two broken promises on me."

"My goodness, Phelim, but you tuck a burdyeen off o' me! Faix, you'll see how happy we'll be."

"To be sure we will! But I'm tould you're sometimes crass, Mrs. Doran. Now, you must

promise to be kind an' lovin' to the childhre, or, be the vestment, I'll brake off the match yet."

"Och, an' why wouldn't I, Phelim acushla? Sure that's but rason."

"Well, take this book an' swear it. Be gorra, your word won't do, for it's a thing my mind's made up on. It's I that'll be fond o' the childhre."

"An' how am I to swear it, Phelim? for I never tuck an oath myself yet."

"Take the book in your hand, shut one eye, and say the words afther me. Be the contints o' this book."

"Be the contints o' this book."

"I'll be kind, an' motherly, an' boistherous."

"I'll be kind, an' motherly, an boistherous."

"To my own childhre,"

"To my own childhre,"

"An' never bate or abuse thim,"

"An' never bate or abuse thim,"

"Barrin' whin they desarve it;"

"Barrin' whin they desarve it;"

"An' this I swear,"

"An' this I swear,"

"In the presence of *St. Phelim.*"

"In the presence of *St. Phelim.*"

"Amin!"

"Amin!"

"Now, Mrs. Doran, acushla, if you could jist know how asy my conscience is about the childhre, poor crathurs, you'd be in mighty fine spirits. There won't be sich a lovin' husband, begad, in Europe. It's I that'll coax

you, an' butther you up like a new pair o' brogues; but, begad, you must be sweeter than liquorice or sugar-candy to me. Won't you, darlin'?"

"Be the crass, Phelim, darlin', jewel, I'll be as kind a wife as ever breathed! Arrah, Phelim, won't you come down to-morrow evenin'? There'll be no one at home but myself, an'—ha, ha, ha!—Oh, you coaxin' rogue! But, Phelim, you mustn't be—Oh, you're a rogue! I see you laughin'! Will you come, darlin'?"

"Surely. But, death alive! I was near forgettin'; sure, bad luck to the penny o' the ten guineas but I paid away."

"Paid away! Is it my ten guineas?"

"Your ten guineas, darlin'; an' right well I managed it. Didn't I secure Pat Hanratty's farm by it. Sam Appleton's uncle had it as good as taken; so, begad, I came down wid the ten guineas, by way of airles, an' now we have it. I knew you'd be plased to hear it, an' that you'd be proud to give me ten more for clo'es an' the weddin' expenses. Isn't that good news, avourneen? Eh, you duck o' diamonds? Faith, let Phelim alone! An' another thing—I must call you *Bridget* for the future: it's sweeter an' more lovin'."

"Phelim, I wish you had consulted wid me afore you done it: but it can't be helped. Come down to-morrow evenin', an' we'll see what's to be done."

"The grace o' heaven upon you, but you *are* the winnin'est woman alive this day! Now take my advice an' go home without comin' in.

returned to appease the anger of Donovan, as he had that of the others. Fresh fiction was again drawn forth, every word of which the worthy father corroborated. They promised to go down that night and drink another bottle together—a promise which they knew by the state of their finances it was impossible to fulfil. The prospect of the "booze", however, tranquillized Donovan, who in his heart relished a glass of liquor as well as either Phelim or the father. Shaking of hands and professions of friendship were again beginning to multiply with great rapidity when Peggy thought proper to make a few observations on the merits of her admirer.

"In regard to me," she observed, "you may save yourselves the throuble o' comin'. I wouldn't marry Phelim afther what the priest said yistherday if he had the riches o' the townland we're spakin' in. I never cared for him, nor liked him; an' it was only to plase my father an' mother that I consinted to be called to him at all. I'll never join myself to the likes of him. If I do, may I be a corpse the next minute!"

Having thus expressed herself, she left her father, Phelim, and Larry to digest her sentiments, and immediately went home.

Donovan, who was outrageous at this contempt of his authority, got his hat, with the intention of compelling her to return and retract in their presence what she had said; but the daughter, being the more light-footed of the two, reached home before he could overtake

were about to give up the scrutiny, one of the gentlemen approached Phelim, and, looking narrowly into his countenance, exclaimed:

"Here, jailer, this man I identify. I cannot be mistaken in his face; the rough visage and the drooping eye of that fellow put all doubt as to his identity out of question. What's his name?"

"He gives his name, sir, as Arthur Maguire."

"Arthur what, sir?" said another of the turnkeys, looking earnestly at Phelim. "Why, sir, this is the fellow that swore the alibis for the Kellys—ay, an' for the Delaneys, an' for the O'Briens. His name is Phelim O'Toole; an' a purty boy he is, by all report."

Phelim, though his heart sank within him, attempted to banter them out of their bad opinion of him; but there was something peculiarly dismal and melancholy in his mirth.

"Why, gintlemen—ha, ha!—be gorra, I'd take it as a convanience—I mane, as a favour—if you'd believe me that there's a small taste of mistake here. I was sent by Square S. wid a letter to Mr. S——t, an' he gave me fifty ordhers to bring him back an answer this day. As for Phelim O'Toole, if you mane the rascal that swears the alibis, faith I can't deny but I'm as like him, the villain, as one egg is to another. Bad luck to his 'dhroop,' any how; little I thought that it would ever bring me into throuble—ha, ha, ha! Mr. S——t, what answer have you for the Square, sir? Bedad, I'm afeard I'll be late."

"That letter, Master Maguire, or Toole, or

whatever your name is, authorizes me to detain you as a prisoner until I hear further from Mr. S."

"I identify him distinctly," said the gentleman once more. "I neither doubt nor waver on the subject; so you will do right to detain him. I shall lodge informations against him immediately."

"Sir," said Phelim to the jailer, "the Square couldn't mane me at all, in regard that it was another person he gave the letter to for to bring to you, the other person gave it to me. I can make my oath of that. Be gorra, you're playin' your thricks upon sthrangers now, I suppose."

"Why, you lying rascal," said the jailer, "have you not a few minutes ago asserted to the contrary? Did you not tell me that your name was Arthur, or Art Maguire? That you are Mr. S.'s messenger, and expect to be made his groom. And now you deny all this."

"He's Phelim O'Toole," said the turnkey, "I'll swear to him; but if you wait for a minute I'll soon prove it."

He immediately retired to the cell of a convict, whom he knew to be from the townland of Teernarogarah; and ordering its inmate to look through the bars of his window, which commanded the yard, he asked him if there was anyone among them whom he knew.

The fellow in a few minutes replied: "Whethen, divil a one, barrin' bouncin' Phelim O'Toole."

The turnkey brought him down to the yard,

where he immediately recognized Phelim as an old friend, shook hands with him, and addressed him by his name.

"Bad luck to you," said Phelim in Irish, "is this a place to welcome your friends to?"

"There is some mystery here," said the jailer. "I suppose the fact is, that this fellow returned a wrong name to Mr. S., and that that accounts for the name of Arthur Maguire being in the letter."

All Phelim's attempts to extricate himself were useless. He gave them the proper version of the letter affair with Fool Art, but without making the slightest impression. The jailer desired him to be locked up.

"Divil fire you all, you villains!" exclaimed Phelim, "is it goin' to put me in crib ye are for no raison in life? Doesn't the whole parish know that I was never off o' my bed for the last three months, wid a complaint I had, antil widin two or three days agone!"

"There are two excellent motives for putting you in crib," said the jailer; "but if you can prove that you have been confined to your bed so long as you say, why, it will be all the better for yourself. Go with the turnkey."

"No, tarenation to the fut I'll go," said Phelim, "till I'm carrid."

"Doesn't the gintleman identify you, you villain!" replied one of the turnkeys; "an' isn't the Square's letther in your favour?"

"Villain, is id!" exclaimed Phelim. "An' from a hangman's cousin, too, we're to bear this!—eh? Take that, anyhow, an' maybe

you'll get more when you don't expect it. Whoo! Success, Phelim! There's blood in you still, abouchal!"

He accompanied the words by a spring of triumph from the ground, and surveyed the already senseless turnkey with exultation. In a moment, however, he was secured for the purpose of being put into strong irons.

"To the devil's warmin' pan wid ye all," he continued, "you may do your worst. I defy you. Ha! by the heavens above me *you'll* suffer for this, my fine gintleman. What can ye do but hang or thransport me, you villains? I tell ye, if a man's sowl had a crust of sin on it a foot thick, the best way to get it off 'ud be jist to shoot a dozen like you. Sin! Oh, the divil saize the sin at all in it. But wait! Did ye ever hear of a man they call Dan O'Connell? Be my sowl, he'll make yez rub your heels together for keepin' an innocent boy in jail, that there's no law or no warrant out for. This is the way we're thrated by thim that's ridin' rough shod over us. But have a taste o' patience, ye scoundrels! It won't last, I can tell yez. Our day will soon come, an' thin I'd recommend yez to thravel for your health. Hell saize the day's pace or happiness ever will be seen in the country till laws, an' judges, an' juries, an' jails, an' jailers, an' turnkeys, an' hangmen is all swep out of it. Saize the day! An' along wid them goes the parsons, an' procthors, tithes an' taxes, all to the divil together. That day's not far off, ye d—d villains! An' now I tell ye, that if a hair o' my head's touched

—ay, if I was hanged to-morrow—I'd lave *them* behind me that 'ud put a bullet, wid the help an' blessin' o' God, through anyone that'll injure me! So lay that to your conscience, an' do your best. Be the crass, O'Connell 'ill make you look nine ways at wanst for this! He's the boy can put the pin in your noses! He's the boy can make yez thrimble, one an' all o' yez—like a dog in a wet sack! An', wid the blessin' o' God, he'll help us to put our feet on your necks afore long!"

"That's a prudent speech," observed the jailer; "it will serve you very much."

Phelim consigned him to a very warm settlement in reply.

"Bring the ruffian off," added the jailer; "put him in solitary confinement."

"Put me wid Foodle Flattery," said Phelim; "you've got *him* here, an' I'll go nowhere else. Faith, you'll suffer for givin' me false imprisonment. Doesn't O'Connell's name make you shake? Put me wid Foodle Flattery, I say."

"Foodle Flattery! There is no such man here. Have you got such a person here?" enquired the jailer of the turnkey."

"Not at present," said the turnkey; "but I know Foodle well. We've had him here twice. Come away, Phelim; follow me; you're goin' to be put where you'll have an opportunity of sayin' your prayers."

He then ushered Phelim to a cell, where the reader may easily imagine what he felt. His patriotism rose to a high pitch; he deplored the wrongs of his country bitterly, and was

clearly convinced that until jails, judges, and assizes, together with a long train of similar grievances, were utterly abolished, Ireland could never be right, nor persecuted "boys", like himself, at full liberty to burn or murder the enemies of their country with impunity. Notwithstanding these heroic sentiments, an indifferent round oath more than once escaped him against Ribbonism in whole and in part. He cursed the system, and the day, and the hour on which he was inveigled into it. He cursed those who had initiated him; nor did his father and mother escape for their neglect of his habits, his morals, and his education. This occurred when he had time for reflection. While thus dispensing his execrations, the jailer and the three gentlemen having been struck with his allusion to Foodle Flattery, and remembering that Foodle was of indifferent morals, came to the unanimous opinion that it would be a good plan to secure him; and by informing him that Phelim was in prison upon a capital charge, endeavour to work upon his fears, by representing his companion as disposed to turn approver. The state of the country, and Foodle's character, justified his apprehension on suspicion. He was accordingly taken, and when certified of Phelim's situation, acted precisely as had been expected. With very little hesitation, he made a full disclosure of the names of several persons concerned in burnings, waylayings, and robbery of arms. The two first names on the list were those of Phelim and Appleton, with several besides, some of

whom bore an excellent, and others an execrable character in the country.

The next day Fool Art went to Larry's, where he understood that Phelim was on the missing list. This justified his suspicions of the Squire; but by no means lessened his bitterness against him, for the prank he had intended to play upon him. With great simplicity he presented himself at the Big House, and met its owner on the lawn, accompanied by two other gentlemen. The magistrate was somewhat surprised at seeing Art at large, when he imagined him to be under the jailer's lock and key.

"Well, Art," said he, concealing his amazement, "did you deliver my letter?"

"It went safe, your honour," replied Art.

"Did you yourself give it into his hands as I ordered you?"

"Whoo! Be dodda, would your honour think Art 'ud tell a lie? Sure he read it. Aha!"

"An' what did he say, Art?"

"Whoo! Why, that he didn't know which of us had the least sense. You for sendin' a fool on a message, or me for deliverin' it."

"Was that all that happened?"

"No, sir. He said," added the fool with bitter sarcasm, alluding to a duel, in which the Squire's character had not come off with flying colours—"he said, sir, that whin you have another challenge to fight, you may get sick *agin* for threepence to the poticarry."

This having been the manner in which the

Squire was said to have evaded the duel, it is unnecessary to say that Art's readiness to refresh his memory on the subject prevented him from being received at the Big House in future.

Reader, remember that we only intended to give you a sketch of Phelim O'Toole's courtship; we will, however, go so far beyond our original plan as to apprise you of his fate.

When it became known in the parish that he was in jail, under a charge of felony, Sally Flattery abandoned all hopes of securing him as a husband. The housekeeper felt suitable distress, and hoped, should the poor boy be acquitted, that "he might hould up his head wid any o' them". Phelim, through the agency of his father, succeeded in getting ten guineas from her to pay the lawyers for defending him; not one penny of which he applied to the purpose for which he obtained it. The expenses of his defence were drawn from the Ribbon fund, and the Irish reader cannot forget the eloquent and pathetic appeal made by his counsel to the jury on his behalf, and the strength with which the fact of his being the whole support of a helpless father and mother was stated. The appeal, however, was ineffectual; worthy Phelim was convicted, and sentenced to transportation for life. When his old acquaintances heard the nature of his destiny, they remembered the two prophecies that had been so often uttered concerning him. One of them was certainly fulfilled to the letter; we mean that in which it was stated "that the greatest swaggerer among the girls generally comes to

the wall at last". The other, though not literally accomplished, was touched at least upon the spirit; transportation for life ranks next to hanging.

We cannot avoid mentioning a fact connected with Phelim which came to light while he remained in prison. By incessant trouble he was prevailed upon, or rather compelled, to attend the prison school, and on examining him touching his religious knowledge, it appeared that he was ignorant of the plainest truths of Christianity; that he knew not how or by whom the Christian religion had been promulgated; nor, indeed, any other moral truth connected with Revelation.

Immediately after his transportation Larry took to drink, and his mother to begging, for she had no other means of living. In this mode of life the husband was soon compelled to join her. They are both mendicants, and Sheelah now appears sensible of the error in their manner of bringing Phelim up.

"Ah, Larry!" she is sometimes heard to say, "I doubt that we wor wrong for flyin' in the face o' God, becase He didn't give us childhre. An' when it plased Him to grant us a son, we oughtn't to've spoiled him by over-indulgence an' by lettin' him have his own head in everything, as we did. If we had sint him to school, and larned him to work, an' corrected him when he desarved it, instead of laughin' at his lies, an' misbehaviour, an' his oaths, as if they wor sport—ay' an' abusin' the nabours when they'd complain of him, or tell

us what he was—ay!—if we had, it's a credit an' a comfort he'd be to us now, an' not a shame, an' a disgrace, an' an affliction. We made our own bed, Larry, an' now we must lie down an it. An', God help us! we made *his* bed too, poor boy! an' a hard one it is. God forgive us! but, anyhow, my heart's breakin', for bad as he was, sure we haven't him to look upon!"

"Thrue," replied Larry. "Still, he was game an' cute to the last. Biddy Doran's ten guineas will sarve him *beyant*, poor fellow! But sure the 'boys' kep their word to him, anyhow, in regard of shootin' Foodle Flattery. Myself was never betther plased in my life than to hear that he got the slugs into his heart, the villain!"

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neither murder nor illegal violence of any description can be the proper mode of removing or redressing them. We have kept Phelim's Ribbonism in the background, because its details could excite only aversion, and preferred exhibiting his utter ignorance of morality upon a less offensive subject, in order that the reader might be enabled to infer, rather than to witness with his mind's eye, the deeper crimes of which he was capable.

Neal Malone

There never was a greater souled or doughtier tailor than little Neal Malone. Though but four feet four in height, he paced the earth with the courage and confidence of a giant; nay, one would have imagined that he walked as if he feared the world itself was about to give way under him. Let no one dare to say in future that a tailor is but the ninth part of a man. That reproach has been gloriously taken away from the character of the cross-legged corporation by Neal Malone. He has wiped it off like a stain from the collar of a second-hand coat; he has pressed this wrinkle out of the lying front of antiquity; he has drawn together this rent in the respectability of his profession. No. By him who was breeches-maker to the gods—that is, except, like Highlanders, they eschewed inexpressibles—by him who cut Jupiter's frieze jocks for winter, and eke by the bottom of his thimble, we swear that Neal Malone was *more* than the ninth part of a man!

Setting aside the Patagonians, we maintain that two-thirds of mortal humanity were comprised in Neal; and perhaps we might venture

to assert, that two-thirds of Neal's humanity were equal to six-thirds of another man's. It is right well known that Alexander the Great was a little man, and we doubt whether, had Alexander the Great been bred to the tailoring business, he would have exhibited so much of the hero as Neal Malone. Neal was descended from a fighting family, who had signalized themselves in as many battles as ever any single hero of antiquity fought. His father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather were all fighting-men, and his ancestors in general, up, probably, to Con of the Hundred Battles himself. No wonder, therefore, that Neal's blood should cry out against the cowardice of his calling; no wonder that he should be an epitome of all that was valorous and heroic in a peaceable man, for we neglected to inform the reader that Neal, though "bearing no base mind", never fought any man in his own person. That, however, deducted nothing from his courage. If he did not fight, it was simply because he found cowardice universal. No man would engage him; his spirit blazed in vain: his thirst for battle was doomed to remain unquenched, except by whisky, and this only increased it. In short, he could find no foe. He has often been known to challenge the first cudgel-players and pugilists of the parish; to provoke men of fourteen stone weight; and to bid mortal defiance to faction heroes of all grades—but in vain. There was that in him which told them that an encounter with Neal would strip them of their laurels. Neal saw all this with a lofty indignation; he

"Thus an' [illegible]" exclaimed Neal one day, when half [illegible] in the fair, "am I never to get a bit of fighting? Is there no [illegible] person to stand afore Neal Malone? Is this an' be this, I'm [illegible] the point of a [illegible]! I'm [illegible] my relations by the life I'm livin'! Well none o' ye fight me either for love, money, or whisky—friend or inimy, an' bad luck to ye! I don't care a *tranzen* which, only out of pure friendship, let us have a morsel o' the rale bick-up, 'tany rate. Frind or inimy, I say agin, if you regard me; sure *that* makes no differ, only let us have the fight."

This excellent heroism was all wasted; Neal could not find a single adversary. Except he divided himself like Hotspur, and went to buffets one hand against the other, there was no chance of a fight; no person to be found sufficiently magnanimous to encounter the tailor. On the contrary, every one of his friends—or, in other words, every man in the parish—was ready to support him. He was clapped on the back until his bones were

nearly dislocated in his body, and his hand shaken until his arm lost its cunning at the needle for half a week afterwards. This, to be sure, was a bitter business—a state of being past endurance. Every man was his friend—no man was his enemy. A desperate position for any person to find himself in, but doubly calamitous to a martial tailor.

Many a dolorous complaint did Neal make upon the misfortune of having none to wish him ill; and what rendered this hardship doubly oppressive, was the unlucky fact that no exertions of his, however offensive, could procure him a single foe. In vain did he insult, abuse, and malign all his acquaintances. In vain did he father upon them all the rascality and villainy he could think of; he lied against them with a force and originality that would have made many a modern novelist blush for want of invention—but all to no purpose. The world for once became astonishingly Christian; it paid back all his efforts to excite its resentment with the purest of charity; when Neal struck it on the one cheek, it meekly turned unto him the other. It could scarcely be expected that Neal would bear this. To have the whole world in friendship with a man is beyond doubt rather an affliction. Not to have the face of a single enemy to look upon, would decidedly be considered a deprivation of many agreeable sensations by most people, as well as by Neal Malone. Let who might sustain a loss, or experience a calamity, it was a matter of indifference to Neal. They were

only his friends, and he troubled neither his head nor his heart about them.

Heaven help us! There is no man without his trials; and Neal, the reader perceives, was not exempt from his. What did it avail him that he carried a cudgel ready for all hostile contingences? or knit his brows and shook his *kippen* at the fiercest of his fighting friends? The moment he appeared, they softened into downright cordiality. His presence was the signal of peace; for, notwithstanding his unconquerable propensity to warfare, he went abroad as the genius of unanimity, though carrying in his bosom the redoubtable disposition of a warrior; just as the sun, though the source of light himself, is said to be dark enough at bottom.

It could not be expected that Neal, with whatever fortitude he might bear his other afflictions, could bear such tranquillity like a hero. To say that he bore it as one, would be to basely surrender his character; for what hero ever bore a state of tranquillity with courage? It affected his cutting out! It produced what Burton calls "a windie melancholie", which was nothing else than an accumulation of courage that had no means of escaping, if courage can without indignity be ever said to escape. He sat uneasy on his lap-board. Instead of cutting out soberly, he flourished his scissors as if he were heading a faction; he wasted much chalk by scoring his cloth in wrong places, and even caught his hot goose without a holder. These symptoms

alarmed his friends, who persuaded him to go to a doctor. Neal went, to satisfy them; but he knew that no prescription could drive the courage out of him—that he was too far gone in heroism to be made a coward of by apothecary stuff. Nothing in the pharmacopœia could physic him into a pacific state. His disease was simply the want of an enemy, and an unaccountable superabundance of friendship on the part of his acquaintances. How could a doctor remedy this by a prescription? Impossible. The doctor, indeed, recommended blood-letting; but to lose blood in a peaceable manner was not only cowardly, but a bad cure for courage. Neal declined it: he would lose no blood for any man until he could not help it; which was giving the character of a hero at a single touch. *His* blood was not to be thrown away in this manner; the only lancet ever applied to his relations was the cudgel, and Neal scorned to abandon the principles of his family.

His friends finding that he reserved his blood for more heroic purposes than dastardly phlebotomy, knew not what to do with him. His perpetual exclamation was, as we have already stated, "*I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'!*" They did everything in their power to cheer him with the hope of a drubbing; told him he lived in an excellent country for a man afflicted with his malady; and promised, if it were at all possible, to create him a private enemy or two, who, they hoped in heaven, might trounce him to some purpose.

This sustained him for a while; but as day

after day passed, and no appearance of action presented itself, he could not choose but increase in courage. His soul, like a sword-blade too long in the scabbard, was beginning to get fuliginous by inactivity. He looked upon the point of his own needle, and the bright edge of his scissors, with a bitter pang, when he thought of the spirit rusting within him: he meditated fresh insults, studied new plans, and hunted out cunning devices for provoking his acquaintances to battle, until by degrees he began to confound his own brain, and to commit more grievous oversights in his business than ever. Sometimes he sent home to one person a coat, with the legs of a pair of trousers attached to it for sleeves, and despatched to another the arms of the aforesaid coat tacked together as a pair of trousers. Sometimes the coat was made to button behind instead of before, and he frequently placed the pockets in the lower part of the skirts, as if he had been in league with cut-purses.

This was a melancholy situation, and his friends pitied him accordingly.

"Don't be cast down, Neal," said they, "your friends feel for you, poor fellow."

"Divil carry my frinds," replied Neal, "sure there's not one of yez frindly enough to be my inimy. Tare-an'-ounze! what'll I do? *I'm blue-mowlded for want of a batin'!*"

Seeing that their consolation was thrown away upon him, they resolved to leave him to his fate; which they had no sooner done than Neal had thoughts of taking to the *Skio-*

macchia as a last remedy. In this mood he looked with considerable antipathy at his own shadow for several nights; and it is not to be questioned, but that some hard battles would have taken place between them, were it not for the cunning of the shadow, which declined to fight him in any other position than with its back to the wall. This occasioned him to pause, for the wall was a fearful antagonist, inasmuch that it knew not when it was beaten; but there was still an alternative left. He went to the garden one clear day about noon, and hoped to have a bout with the shade, free from interruption. Both approached, apparently eager for the combat, and resolved to conquer or die, when a villainous cloud happening to intercept the light, gave the shadow an opportunity of disappearing; and Neal found himself once more without an opponent.

"It's aisy known," said Neal, "you haven't the *blood* in you, or you'd come to the scratch like a man."

He now saw that fate was against him, and that any further hostility towards the shadow was only a tempting of Providence. He lost his health, spirits, and everything but his courage. His countenance became pale and peaceful-looking; the bluster departed from him; his body shrunk up like a withered parsnip. Thrice was he compelled to take in his clothes, and thrice did he ascertain that much of his time would be necessarily spent in pursuing his retreating person through the solitude of his almost deserted garments.

God knows it is difficult to form a correct opinion upon a situation so paradoxical as Neal's was. To be reduced to skin and bone by the downright friendship of the world was, as the sagacious reader will admit, next to a miracle. We appeal to the conscience of any man who finds himself without an enemy, whether he be not a greater skeleton than the tailor; we will give him fifty guineas provided he can show a calf to his leg. We know he could not; for the tailor had none, and that was because he had not an enemy. No man in friendship with the world ever has calves to his legs. To sum up all in a paradox of our own invention, for which we claim the full credit of originality, we now assert that *more men have risen in the world by the injury of their enemies, than have risen by the kindness of their friends.* You may take this, reader, in any sense; apply it to hanging if you like, it is still immutably and immovably true.

One day Neal sat cross-legged, as tailors usually sit, in the act of pressing a pair of breeches; his hands were placed, backs up, upon the handle of his goose, and his chin rested upon the back of his hands. To judge from his sorrowful complexion one would suppose that he sat rather to be sketched as a picture of misery, or of heroism in distress, than for the industrious purpose of pressing the seams of a garment. There was a great deal of New Burlington-street pathos in his countenance; his face, like the times, was rather out of joint; "the sun was just setting,

and his golden beams fell, with a saddened splendour, athwart the tailor's"——the reader may fill up the picture.

In this position sat Neal, when Mr. O'Connor, the schoolmaster, whose inexpressibles he was turning for the third time, entered the workshop. Mr. O'Connor himself was as finished a picture of misery as the tailor. There was a patient, subdued kind of expression in his face, which indicated a very fair portion of calamity; his eye seemed charged with affliction of the first water; on each side of his nose might be traced two dry channels, which, no doubt, were full enough while the tropical rains of his countenance lasted. Altogether, to conclude from appearances, it was a dead match in affliction between him and the tailor; both seemed sad, fleshless, and unthriving.

"Misther O'Connor," said the tailor, when the schoolmaster entered, "won't you be pleased to sit down?"

Mr. O'Connor sat; and, after wiping his forehead, laid his hat upon the lap-board, put his handkerchief in his pocket, and looked upon the tailor. The tailor, in return, looked upon Mr. O'Connor; but neither of them spoke for some minutes. Neal, in fact, appeared to be wrapped up in his own misery, and Mr. O'Connor in his; or, as we often have much gratuitous sympathy for the distresses of our friends, we question but the tailor was wrapped up in Mr. O'Connor's misery, and Mr. O'Connor in the tailor's.

Mr. O'Connor at length said—"Neal, are my inexpressibles finished?"

"I am now pressin' your inexpressibles," replied Neal; "but, be my sowl, Mr. O'Connor, it's not your inexpressibles I'm thinkin' of. I'm not the ninth part of what I was. I'd hardly make paddin' for a collar now."

"Are you able to carry a staff still, Neal?"

"I've a light hazel one that's handy," said the tailor; "but where's the use of carryin' it, whin I can get no one to fight wid? Sure I'm disgracin' my relations by the life I'm ladin'. I'll go to my grave widout ever batin' a man, or bein' bate myself; that's the vexation. Divil the row ever I was able to kick up in my life; *so that I'm fairly blue-mowlded for want of a batin'*. But if you have patience—"

"Patience!" said Mr. O'Connor, with a shake of his head that was perfectly disastrous even to look at; "patience, did you say, Neal?"

"Ay," said Neal, "an', be my sowl, if you deny that I said patience, I'll break your head."

"Ah, Neal," returned the other, "I don't deny it—for though I am teaching philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics every day in my life, yet I'm learning patience myself both night and day. No, Neal; I have forgotten to deny anything. I have not been guilty of a contradiction, out of my own school, for the last fourteen years. I once expressed the shadow of a doubt about twelve years ago, but ever since I have abandoned even doubting.

That doubt was the last expiring effort at maintaining my domestic authority—but I suffered for it."

"Well," said Neal, "if you have patience, I'll tell you what afflicts me from beginnin' to endin'."

"I *will* have patience," said Mr. O'Connor; and he accordingly heard a dismal and indignant tale from the tailor.

"You have told me that fifty times over," said Mr. O'Connor, after hearing the story. "Your spirit is too martial for a pacific life. If you follow my advice, I will teach you how to ripple the calm current of your existence to some purpose. *Marry a wife.* For twenty-five years I have given instructions in three branches, viz., philosophy, knowledge, and mathematics—I am also well versed in matrimony, and I declare that, upon my misery, and by the contents of all my afflictions, it is my solemn and melancholy opinion, that, if you marry a wife, you will, before three months pass over your concatenated state, not have a single complaint to make touching a superabundance of peace and tranquillity, or a love of fighting."

"Do you mane to say that any woman would make me afeard?" said the tailor, deliberately rising up and getting his cudgel. "I'll thank you merely to go over the words agin, till I thrash you widin an inch o' your life. That's all."

"Neal," said the schoolmaster meekly, "I won't fight; I have been too often subdued

ever to presume on the hope of a single victory. My spirit is long since evaporated; I am like one of your own shreds, a mere selvage. Do you not know how much my habiliments have shrunk in, even within the last five years? Hear me, Neal; and venerate my words as if they proceeded from the lips of a prophet. If you wish to taste the luxury of being subdued—if you are, as you say, *blue-moulded for want of a beating*, and sick at heart of a peaceful existence—why, MARRY A WIFE. Neal, send my breeches home with all haste, *for they are wanted*, you understand. Farewell!"

Mr. O'Connor, having thus expressed himself, departed, and Neal stood, with the cudgel in his hand, looking at the door out of which he passed, with an expression of fierceness, contempt, and reflection strongly blended on the ruins of his once heroic visage.

Many a man has happiness within his reach if he but knew it. The tailor had been, hitherto, miserable because he pursued a wrong object. The schoolmaster, however, suggested a train of thought upon which Neal now fastened with all the ardour of a chivalrous temperament. Nay, he wondered that the family spirit should have so completely seized upon the fighting side of his heart, as to preclude all thoughts of matrimony; for he could not but remember that his relations were as ready for marriage as for fighting. To doubt this, would have been to throw a blot upon his own escutcheon. He therefore very prudently asked himself, to whom, if he did not

marry, should he transmit his courage. He was a single man, and, dying as such, he would be the sole depository of his own valour, which, like Junius's secret, must perish with him. If he could have left it, as a legacy, to such of his friends as were most remarkable for cowardice, why, the case would be altered! but this was impossible—and he had now no other means of preserving it to posterity than by creating a posterity to inherit it. He saw, too, that the world was likely to become convulsed. Wars, as everybody knew, were certain to break out; and would it not be an excellent opportunity for being father to a colonel, or, perhaps, a general, that might astonish the world.

The change visible in Neal, after the schoolmaster's last visit, absolutely thunderstruck all who knew him. The clothes, which he had rashly taken in to fit his shrivelled limbs, were once more let out. The tailor expanded with a new spirit; his joints ceased to be supple, as in the days of his valour; his eye became less fiery, but more brilliant. From being martial, he got desperately gallant; but, somehow, he could not afford to act the hero and lover both at the same time. This, perhaps, would be too much to expect from a tailor. His policy was better. He resolved to bring all his available energy to bear upon the charms of whatever fair nymph he should select for the honour of matrimony; to waste his spirit in fighting would, therefore, be a deduction from the single purpose in view.

The transition from war to love is by no means so remarkable as we might at first imagine. We quote Jack Falstaff in proof of this, or, if the reader be disposed to reject our authority, then we quote Ancient Pistol himself—both of whom we consider as the most finished specimens of heroism that ever carried a safe skin. Acres would have been a hero had he worn gloves to prevent the courage from oozing out at his palms, or not felt such an unlucky antipathy to the "snug lying in the Abbey"; and as for Captain Bobadil, he never had an opportunity of putting his plan for vanquishing an army into practice. We fear, indeed, that neither his character, nor Ben Jonson's knowledge of human nature, is properly understood; for it certainly could not be expected that a man, whose spirit glowed to encounter a whole host, could, without tarnishing his dignity, if closely pressed, condescend to fight an individual. But as these remarks on courage may be felt by the reader as an invidious introduction of a subject disagreeable to him, we beg to hush it for the present and return to the tailor.

No sooner had Neal begun to feel an inclination to matrimony, than his friends knew that his principles had veered, by the change now visible in his person and deportment. They saw he had *ratted* from courage, and joined love. Heretofore his life had been all winter, darkened by storm and hurricane. The fiercer virtues had played the devil with him; every word was thunder, every look lightning; but

now all that had passed away;—before he was the *fortiter in re*, at present he was the *suaviter in modo*. His existence was perfect spring—beautifully vernal. All the amiable and softer qualities began to bud about his heart; a genial warmth was diffused over him; his soul got green within him; every day was serene, and if a cloud happened to become visible, there was a roguish rainbow astride of it, on which sat a beautiful Iris that laughed down at him, and seemed to say, "Why the dickens, Neal, don't you marry a wife?"

Neal could not resist the afflatus which descended on him; an ethereal light dwelled, he thought, upon the face of nature; the colour of the cloth which he cut out from day to day was, to his enraptured eye, like the colour of Cupid's wings—all purple; his visions were worth their weight in gold; his dreams a credit to the bed he slept on; and his feelings, like blind puppies, young and alive to the milk of love and kindness which they drew from his heart. Most of this delight escaped the observation of the world, for Neal, like your true lover, became shy and mysterious. It is difficult to say what he resembled; no dark lantern ever had more light shut up within itself than Neal had in his soul, although his friends were not aware of it. They knew, indeed, that he had turned his back upon valour; but beyond this their knowledge did not extend.

Neal was shrewd enough to know that what he felt must be love;—nothing else could dis-

tent him with happiness, until his soul felt light and bladder-like, but love. As an oyster opens, when expecting the tide, so did his soul expand at the contemplation of matrimony. Labour ceased to be a trouble to him; he sang and sewed from morning to night; his hot goose no longer burned him, for his heart was as hot as his goose; the vibrations of his head at each successive stitch were no longer sad and melancholy. There was a buoyant shake of exultation in them which showed that his soul was placid and happy within him.

Endless honour be to Neal Malone for the originality with which he managed the tender sentiment! He did not, like your commonplace lovers, first discover a pretty girl, and afterwards become enamoured of her. No such thing; he had the passion prepared beforehand—cut out and made-up as it were, ready for any girl whom it might fit. This was falling in love in the abstract, and let no man condemn it without a trial; for many a long-winded argument could be urged in its defence. It is always wrong to commence business without capital, and Neal had a good stock to begin with. All we beg is, that the reader will not confound it with Platonism, which never marries; but he is at full liberty to call it Socratism, which takes unto itself a wife, and suffers accordingly.

Let no one suppose that Neal forgot the schoolmaster's kindness, or failed to be duly grateful for it. Mr. O'Connor was the first person whom he consulted touching his passion. With a cheerful soul he waited on that

melancholy and gentleman-like man, and in the very luxury of his heart told him that he was in love.

"In love, Neal!" said the schoolmaster. "May I enquire with whom?"

"Wid nobody in particular yet," replied Neal; "but of late I'm got divilish fond o' the girls in general."

"And do you call that being in love, Neal?" said Mr. O'Connor.

"Why, what else would I call it?" returned the tailor. "Amn't I fond of them?"

"Then it must be what is termed the Universal Passion, Neal," observed Mr. O'Connor, "although it is the first time I have seen such an illustration of it as you present in your own person."

"I wish you would advise me how to act," said Neal; "I'm as happy as a prince since I began to get fond o' them, an' to think of marriage."

The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked rather miserable. Neal rubbed his hands with glee, and looked perfectly happy. The schoolmaster shook his head again, and looked more miserable than before. Neal's happiness also increased on the second rubbing.

Now, to tell the secret at once, Mr. O'Connor would not have appeared so miserable, were it not for Neal's happiness; nor Neal so happy, were it not for Mr. O'Connor's misery. It was all the result of *contrast*; but this you will not understand unless you be deeply read in modern novels.

Mr. O'Connor, however, was a man of sense, who knew, upon this principle, that the longer he continued to shake his head, the more miserable he must become, and the more also would he increase Neal's happiness; but he had no intention of increasing Neal's happiness at his own expense—for, upon the same hypothesis, it would have been for Neal's interest had he remained shaking his head there, and getting miserable until the day of judgment. He consequently declined giving the third shake, for he thought that plain conversation was, after all, more significant and forcible than the most eloquent nod, however ably translated.

"Neal," said he, "could you, by stretching your imagination, contrive to rest contented with nursing your passion in solitude, and love the sex at a distance?"

"How could I nurse and mind my business?" replied the tailor. "I'll never nurse so long as I'll have the wife; and as for 'magination, it depends upon the grain of it whether I can stretch it or not. I don't know that I ever made a coat of it in my life."

"You don't understand me, Neal," said the schoolmaster. "In recommending marriage, I was only driving one evil out of you by introducing another. Do you think that, if you abandoned all thoughts of a wife, you would get heroic again?—that is, would you take once more to the love of fighting?"

"There is no doubt but I would," said the tailor: "if I miss the wife, I'll kick up such a

dust as never was seen in the parish, an' you're the first man that I'll lick. But now that I'm in love," he continued, "sure, I ought to look out for the wife."

"Ah, Neal!" said the schoolmaster, "you are tempting destiny: your temerity be, with all its melancholy consequences, upon your own head."

"Come," said the tailor, "it wasn't to hear you groaning to the tune of 'Dhrimmindhoo,' or 'The ould woman rockin' her cradle,' that I came; but to know if you could help me in makin' out the wife. That's the discoorse."

"Look at me, Neal," said the schoolmaster solemnly; "I am at this moment, and have been any time for the last fifteen years, a living *caveto* against matrimony. I do not think that earth possesses such a luxury as a single solitary life. Neal, the monks of old were happy men: they were all fat, and had double chins; and, Neal, I tell you that all fat men are in general happy. Care cannot come at them so readily as at a thin man; before it gets through the strong outworks of flesh and blood with which they are surrounded, it becomes treacherous to its original purpose, joins the cheerful spirits it meets in the system, and dances about the heart in all the madness of mirth; just like a sincere ecclesiastic, who comes to lecture a good fellow against drinking, but who forgets his lecture over his cups, and is laid under the table with such success, that he either never comes to finish his lecture, or comes often to be laid under the table. Look at me, Neal;

how wasted, fleshless, and miserable I stand before you. You know how my garments have shrunk in, and what a solid man I was before marriage. Neal, pause, I beseech you: otherwise you stand a strong chance of becoming a nonentity like myself."

"I don't care what I become," said the tailor; "I can't think that you'd be so unrasonable as to expect that any of the Malones should pass out of the world widout either bein' bate or marrid. Have reason, Mr. O'Connor, an' if you can help me to the wife, I promise to take in your coat the next time for nothin'."

"Well, then," said Mr. O'Connor, "what would you think of the butcher's daughter, Biddy Neil? You have always had a thirst for blood, and here you may have it gratified in an innocent manner, should you ever become sanguinary again. 'Tis true, Neal, she is twice your size, and possesses three times your strength; but for that very reason, Neal, marry her if you can. Large animals are placid; and heaven preserve those bachelors, whom I wish well, from a small wife: 'tis such who always wield the sceptre of domestic life, and rule their husbands with a rod of iron."

"Say no more, Mr. O'Connor," replied the tailor; "she's the very girl I'm in love wid, an' never fear but I'll overcome her heart if it can be done by man. Now step over the way to my house, an' we'll have a sup on the head of it. Who's that calling?"

"Ah! Neal, I know the tones—there's a shrillness in them not to be mistaken. Fare-

well! I must depart; you have heard the proverb, 'those who are bound must obey.' Young Jack, I presume, is squalling, and I must either nurse him, rock the cradle, or sing comic tunes for him, though heaven knows with what a disastrous heart I often sing 'Begone Dull Care', 'The Rakes of Newcastle', or 'Peas upon a Trencher'. Neal, I say again, pause before you take this leap in the dark. Pause, Neal, I entreat you. Farewell!"

Neal, however, was gifted with the heart of an Irishman, and scorned caution as the characteristic of a coward; he had, as it appeared, abandoned all design of fighting, but the courage still adhered to him even in making love. He consequently conducted the siege of Biddy Neil's heart with a degree of skill and valour which would not have come amiss to Marshal Gerald at the siege of Antwerp. Locke or Dugald Stewart, indeed, had they been cognizant of the tailor's triumph, might have illustrated the principle on which he succeeded —as to ourselves, we can only conjecture it. Our own opinion is, that they were both animated with a congenial spirit. Biddy was the very pink of pugnacity, and could throw in a body blow, or plant a facer, with singular energy and science. Her prowess hitherto had, we confess, been displayed only within the limited range of domestic life; but should she ever find it necessary to exercise it upon a larger scale, there was no doubt whatsoever, in the opinion of her mother, brothers, and sisters, every one of whom she had successively

the hour of ten o'clock, Neal—whose spirits were uncommonly exalted, for his heart luxuriated within him—danced with his bride's maid; after the dance he sat beside her, and got eloquent in praise of her beauty; and it is said too, that he whispered to her, and chucked her chin with considerable gallantry. The *tête-à-tête* continued for some time without exciting particular attention, with one exception; but *that* exception was worth a whole chapter of general rules. Mrs. Malone rose up, then sat down again, and took off a glass of the native; she got up a second time—all the wife rushed upon her heart—she approached them, and in a fit of the most exquisite sensibility, knocked the bride's maid down, and gave the tailor a kick of affecting pathos upon the inexpressibles. The whole scene was a touching one on both sides. The tailor was sent on all-fours to the floor; but Mrs. Malone took him quietly up, put him under her arm, as one would a lap-dog, and with stately step marched away to the connubial apartment, in which everything remained very quiet for the rest of the night.

The next morning Mr. O'Connor presented himself to congratulate the tailor on his happiness. Neal, as his friend shook hands with him, gave the schoolmaster's fingers a slight squeeze, such as a man gives who would gently entreat your sympathy. The schoolmaster looked at him, and thought he shook his head. Of this, however, he could not be certain; for, as he shook his own during the

moment of observation, he concluded that it might be a mere mistake of the eye, or perhaps the result of a mind predisposed to be credulous on the subject of shaking heads.

We wish it were in our power to draw a veil, or curtain, or blind of some description, over the remnant of the tailor's narrative that is to follow; but as it is the duty of every faithful historian to give the secret causes of appearances which the world in general do not understand, so we think it but honest to go on, impartially and faithfully, without shrinking from the responsibility that is frequently annexed to truth.

For the first three days after matrimony, Neal felt like a man who had been translated to a new and more lively state of existence. He had expected, and flattered himself, that the moment this event should take place, he would once more resume his heroism, and experience the pleasure of a drubbing. This determination he kept a profound secret—nor was it known until a future period, when he disclosed it to Mr. O'Connor. He intended, therefore, that marriage should be nothing more than a mere parenthesis in his life—a kind of asterisk, pointing, in a note at the bottom, to this single exception in his general conduct—a *nota bene* to the spirit of a martial man, intimating that he had been peaceful only for a while. In truth, he was, during the influence of love over him, and up to the very day of his marriage, secretly as blue-moulded as ever for want of a beating. The heroic

penchant lay snugly latent in his heart, unchecked and unmodified. He flattered himself that he was achieving a capital imposition upon the world at large—that he was actually hoaxing mankind in general—and that such an excellent piece of knavish tranquillity had never been perpetrated before his time.

On the first week after his marriage there chanced to be a fair in the next market-town. Neal, after breakfast, brought forward a bunch of *shillelahs*, in order to select the best; the wife enquired the purpose of the selection, and Neal declared that he was resolved to have a fight that day, if it were to be had, he said, for "love or money". "The thruth is," he exclaimed, strutting with fortitude about the house, "the thruth is, that I've *done* the whole of yez—*I'm as blue-mowlded as ever for want of a batin'*."

"Don't go," said the wife.

"I *will* go," said Neal, with vehemence; "I'll go if the whole parish was to go to prevint me."

In about another half-hour Neal sat down quietly to his business, instead of going to the fair.

Much ingenious speculation might be indulged in upon this abrupt termination to the tailor's most formidable resolution; but, for our own part, we will prefer going on with the narrative, leaving the reader at liberty to solve the mystery as he pleases. In the meantime we say this much,—let those who cannot make it out, carry it to their tailor; it is a tailor's mystery, and no one has so good

a right to understand it—except, perhaps, a tailor's wife.

At the period of his matrimony, Neal had become as plump and as stout as he ever was known to be in his plumpest and stoutest days. He and the schoolmaster had been very intimate about this time; but we know not how it happened that soon afterwards he felt a modest bridelike reluctance in meeting with that afflicted gentleman. As the eve of his union approached, he was in the habit, during the schoolmaster's visits to his workshop, of alluding, in rather a sarcastic tone, considering the unthriving appearance of his friend, to the increasing lustiness of his person. Nay, he has often leaped up from his lap-board, and, in the strong spirit of exultation, thrust out his leg in attestation of his assertion, slapping it, moreover, with a loud laugh of triumph, that sounded like a knell to the happiness of his emaciated acquaintance. The schoolmaster's philosophy, however, unlike his flesh, never departed from him; his usual observation was, "Neal, we are both receding from the same point; you increase in flesh, whilst I, heaven help me! am fast diminishing."

The tailor received these remarks with very boisterous mirth, whilst Mr. O'Connor simply shook his head, and looked sadly upon his limbs, now shrouded in a superfluity of garments, somewhat resembling a slender thread of water in a shallow summer stream, nearly wasted away, and surrounded by an unproportionate extent of channel.

The fourth month after the marriage arrived. Neal, one day near its close, began to dress himself in his best apparel. Even then, when buttoning his waistcoat, he shook his head after the manner of Mr. O'Connor, and made observations upon the great extent to which it overfolded him.

"Well," thought he, with a sigh—"this waistcoat certainly *did* fit me to a T; but it's wondherful to think how—cloth stretches!"

"Neal," said his wife, on perceiving him drest, "where are you bound for?"

"Faith, *for life*," replied Neal, with a mitigated swagger; "and I'd as soon, if it had been the will of Provid——"

He paused.

"Where are you going?" asked the wife a second time.

"Why," he answered, "only to the dance at Jemmy Connolly's; I'll be back early."

"Don't go," said the wife.

"I'll go," said Neal, "if the whole counthry was to prevint me. Thunder an' lightnin', woman, who am I?" he exclaimed in a loud but rather infirm voice; "amn't I Neal Malone, that never met a *man* who'd fight him! Neal Malone, that was never beat by *man*! Why, tare-an'-ounze, woman! Whoo! I'll get enraged some time, an' play the divil! Who's afeard, I say?"

"*Don't go*," added the wife a third time, giving Neal a significant look in the face.

In about another half-hour Neal sat down quietly to his business instead of going to the dance.

Neal now turned himself, like many a sage in similar circumstances, to philosophy; that is to say—he began to shake his head upon principle, after the manner of the schoolmaster. He would, indeed, have preferred the bottle upon principle; but there was no getting at the bottle, except through the wife; and it so happened that by the time it reached him there was little consolation left in it. Neal bore all in silence; for silence, his friend had often told him, was a proof of wisdom.

Soon after this, Neal one evening met Mr. O'Connor by chance upon a plank which crossed a river. This plank was only a foot in breadth, so that no two individuals could pass each other upon it. We cannot find words in which to express the dismay of both on finding that they absolutely glided past one another without collision.

Both paused, and surveyed each other solemnly; but the astonishment was all on the side of Mr. O'Connor.

"Neal," said the schoolmaster, "by all the household gods, I conjure you to speak, that I may be assured you live!"

The ghost of a blush crossed the churchyard visage of the tailor.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "why the divil did you tempt me to marry a wife?"

"Neal," said his friend, "answer me in the most solemn manner possible—throw into your countenance all the gravity you can assume; speak as if you were under the hands of the hangman, with the rope about your neck, for

the question is indeed a trying one which I am about to put. Are you still 'blue-moulded for want of beating'?"

The tailor collected himself to make a reply; he put one leg out—the very leg which he used to show in triumph to his friend; but, alas, how dwindled! He opened his waistcoat, and lapped it round him, until he looked like a weasel on his hind-legs. He then raised himself up on his tiptoes, and in an awful whisper replied, "No!!! the divil a bit I'm *blue-mowlded* for want of a batin'."

The schoolmaster shook his head in his own miserable manner; but, alas! he soon perceived that the tailor was as great an adept at shaking the head as himself. Nay, he saw that there was a calamitous refinement—a delicacy of shake in the tailor's vibrations, which gave to his own nod a very commonplace character.

The next day the tailor took in his clothes; and from time to time continued to adjust them to the dimensions of his shrinking person. The schoolmaster and he, whenever they could steal a moment, met and sympathized together. Mr. O'Connor, however, bore up somewhat better than Neal. The latter was subdued in heart and spirit; thoroughly, completely, and intensely vanquished. His features became sharpened by misery, for a termagant wife is the whetstone on which all the calamities of a hen-pecked husband are painted by the devil. He no longer strutted as he was wont to do; he no longer carried a cudgel as if

power. Often have they been heard, in the dusk of evening, singing behind a remote hedge that melancholy ditty, "Let us *both* be unhappy together", which rose upon the twilight breeze with a cautious quaver of sorrow truly heart-rending and lugubrious.

"Neal," said Mr. O'Connor on one of those occasions, "here is a book which I recommend to your perusal; it is called *The Afflicted Man's Companion*; try if you cannot glean some consolation out of it."

"Faith," said Neal, "I'm for ever oblaged to you, but I don't want it. I've had *The Afflicted Man's Companion* too long, and divil an atom of consolation I can get out of it. I have *enough* o' them, I tell you; but, be me sowl, I'll not

undhertake *a pair* o' them. The very name's enough for me." They then separated.

The tailor's *vis vitæ* must have been powerful, or he would have died. In two years more his friends could not distinguish him from his own shadow, a circumstance which was of great inconvenience to him. Several grasped at the hand of the shadow instead of his; and one man was near paying it five-and-sixpence for making a pair of small-clothes. Neal, it is true, undeceived him with some trouble; but candidly admitted that he was not able to carry home the money. It was difficult, indeed, for the poor tailor to bear what he felt; it is true he bore it as long as he could: but at length he became suicidal, and often had thoughts of "making his own *quietus* with his bare bodkin". After many deliberations and afflictions he ultimately made the attempt; but, alas! he found that the blood of the Malones refused to flow upon so ignominious an occasion. So *he* solved the phenomenon; although the truth was, that his blood was not "i' the vein" for it; none was to be had. What then was to be done? He resolved to get rid of life by some process; and the next that occurred to him was hanging. In a solemn spirit he prepared a selvage, and suspended himself from the rafter of his workshop; but here another disappointment awaited him—he would not hang. Such was his want of gravity that his own weight proved insufficient to occasion his death by mere suspension. His third attempt was at drowning, but he was too light to sink. All the elements—all his

own energies joined themselves, he thought, in a wicked conspiracy to save his life. Having thus tried every avenue to destruction, and failed in all, he felt like a man doomed to live for ever. Henceforward he shrunk and shrivelled by slow degrees, until in the course of time he became so attenuated that the grossness of human vision could no longer reach him.

This, however, could not last always. Though still alive, he was to all intents and purposes imperceptible. He could now only be heard; he was reduced to a mere essence—the very echo of human existence, *vox et præterea nihil.* It is true the schoolmaster asserted that he occasionally caught passing glimpses of him; but that was because he had been himself nearly spiritualized by affliction, and his visual ray purged in the furnace of domestic tribulation. By and by Neal's voice lessened, got fainter and more indistinct, until at length nothing but a doubtful murmur could be heard, which ultimately could scarcely be distinguished from a ringing in the ears.

Such was the awful and mysterious fate of the tailor, who, as a hero, could not of course die; he merely dissolved like an icicle, wasted into immateriality, and finally melted away beyond the perception of mortal sense. Mr. O'Connor is still living, and once more in the fulness of perfect health and strength. His wife, however, we may as well hint, has been dead more than two years.